CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

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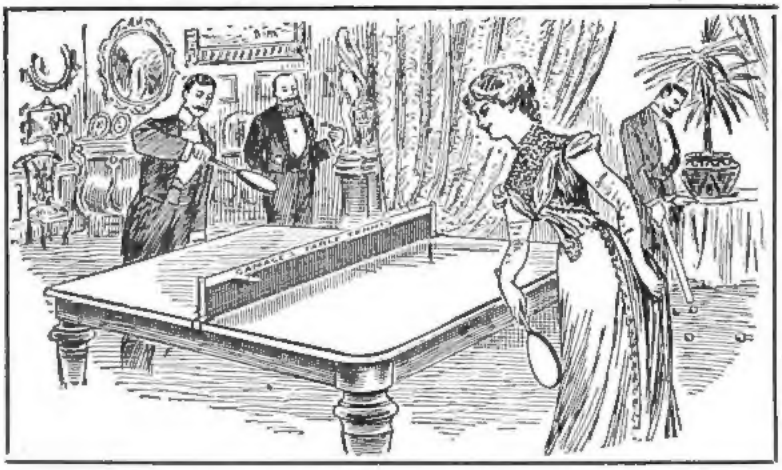

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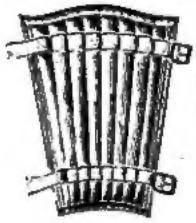

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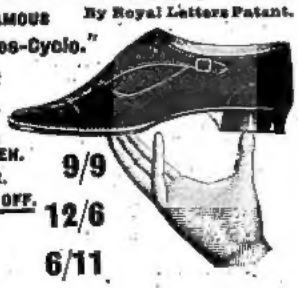

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No. 36 contains 100 WELL MIXED STAMPS including following: Nyassa (new issue, Giraffe), Canada (registered, scarce), Sweden (official); Argentine (1901 issue), New Zealand (1899, obsolete), Wurtemburg (official), Ceylon, New South Wales, United States (unpaid), Tunis, Cuba, Porto Rico, Greece, &c., &c. Post free, 4d. **Given Away Free—a set of 4 Labuan,** including Stag's Head and Palm.

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No. 38 contains 100 WELL MIXED STAMPS including: Jamaica (large Waterfall), Victoria (1901 issue, just received), Spain (old issue), Mexico (obsolete), Nicaragua (1898 issue, scarce), Bulgaria, Benin (1894 issue), France (unpaid), Guatemala (obsolete), Japan (latest issue), Gwalior (scarce Native Indian), Turkey, Philippine Islands (rare), Sweden (old issue), United States (Omaha issue), &c., &c. Post free, 4d. **Given Away Free—a set of 4 Greece Olympian Games.**

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GRAND PHILATELIC COMPETITION!

PRIZES VALUE £100.

The SOUTH AFRICAN STAMP CO., of 368, Strand, to inaugurate their First Season in London, offer three VALUABLE PRIZES, to be competed for amongst their customers.

Competitors will be required to compute the Auction Value of the Stamps contained in the Catalogue of Messrs. Plumridge & Co.'s Sales taking place on February 24th, 25th and 26th, 1902.

The prizes are as follows:—**1st Prize, Cape Woodblock (Error)** 1d. Blue, value **£92**
2nd ,, ,, ,, 1d. Red, ,, **£5**
3rd ,, ,, ,, 4d. Blue, ,, **£3**

CONDITIONS:

The Competitor whose Estimate comes nearest to the actual amount realised will be awarded the first prize, and the two whose estimates are next in order will be awarded the second and third prizes respectively. Should two Competitors send identical estimates, the prize will be awarded to him whose letter was first opened.

All letters will be opened on **February 28th.** None will be received after 4 p.m. on February 24th.

Every intending Competitor, on purchasing stamps to the value of **10/6** from our **Retail Price List,** will be given a numbered ticket entitling him to enter the Competition. He must then write to Messrs. PLUMRIDGE & Co., the well-known Stamp Auctioneers, of 63-64, Chancery Lane, London, W.C., asking them to forward a Catalogue of their Sale, which will be ready for issue on January 1st, 1902.

Having worked out the values of the lots offered, write your estimate and your name and address on the Competitor's Ticket and send it to the ***Stamp Collector's Fortnightly,*** 63-64, Chancery Lane, London, W.C. Envelope to be marked plainly on the outside, **"Skill Competition," S.A.S. Co.**

THE AWARDS will be made two weeks after the Sale takes place, and the result, with Messrs. PLUMRIDGE & Co.'s Certificate, will be advertised in the *Stamp Collector's Fortnightly.*

One Competitor's Ticket will be issued to every customer purchasing stamps to the value of **10/6** from our New *Retail* Price List, which will be sent Post Free on application.

Competitors are *not* limited to One Ticket. The Stamps offered as Prizes have been deposited with Messrs. Plumridge & Co., as per Certificate at foot, and all letters will be opened and judged by the *Stamp Collector's Fortnightly* Syndicate.

COPY OF CERTIFICATE.—We have received in good condition the "Woodblocks" enumerated above, and undertake to hold them, and to distribute them to the winners of this Competition. We also undertake to open all letters and judge the results.—*Signed,* PLUMRIDGE & CO., for the "Stamp Collector's Fortnightly."

CHEAP SETS.

		Unused s. d.	Used s. d.
9	Borneo, complete ..	—	1 6
3	Labuan 25c, 50c & 1 dollar	—	2 6
8	Persia 1sh. 5kr	3 0	—
6	China ½—10c.	—	0 9
5	Bermuda	—	1 0
4	Malay States	0 10	—
8	Persia, obsolete, 1c.—5f.	—	2 6
3	German China	—	0 7
8	Bosnia, New	—	0 9
20	Cuba	1 0	—
8	China ½—50c.	—	2 9
9	U.S. Columbus, 1c, 10c. .	—	0 9
7	Swiss, unpaid	—	1 0
7	Iceland	—	0 10
7	Luxemburg 10—50 head	—	1 6
5	,, ,, ,,	—	0 3
10	French China 5c.—1fr.	—	3 6
8	Servia 1a.—1d.	—	1 6
3	Swiss Jubilee	—	0 3
15	Hungary 1—3f.	—	0 9
10	Hungary, New	—	0 4
3	Jamaica, official ..	—	0 3
5	Newfoundland	—	0 6
5	Sarawak, 1871	—	2 6
7	Jamaica ½—6d.	—	1 0
5	Dutch Indies, surcharged	—	1 6
3	Austria 1g., 2g., 4g. ..	—	1 0
4	Panama	—	0 6
9	Holland 2½—50c.	—	0 6
13	Luxemburg Head, 1c.—1fr.	—	2 0
5	Turkey, 1901	—	0 5
12	Austria, unpaid, 1h.—100h., imperf. .	—	3 0
3	Seychelles, 2c., 6c., 12c., 1900	—	0 8
8	,, 2c., 16c., 1890—	—	4 6
2	Italy, 50 and 100 lire ..	—	1 0
9	Argentine, 1899, ½c.—30c.	—	0 10
6	United States, Pan-American, 1c.—10c.	—	1 0
7	Crete, 1900-1, 1l.—50l. ..	—	3 6
5	Hawai, various .. .	—	0 9
6	Labuan, postage due ..	—	0 9
9	,, ,, ,, ..	—	1 6

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25	All different "South" African stamps	1	6
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50	,, ,,	6	0
40	All different African stamps..	1	3
50	,, ,,	1	6
60	,, ,,	2	0
75	,, ,,	3	0
90	,, ,,	4	0
100	,, ,,	5	0
150	,, ,,	7	0
200	,, ,,	12	6
250	,, ,,	20	0
100	All different stamps	0	6
150	,, ,,	0	9
200	,, ,,	1	0
300	,, ,,	1	9
400	,, ,,	5	0
500	,, ,,	6	6
750	,, ,,	15	0
1000	,, ,,	20	0
50	All different "Queen's Head" stamps only ..	2	0
100	,, ,,	4	6
40	All different Japan	1	6

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1500	,, ,,	50	0
2000	,, ,,	100	0
3000	,, ,,	240	0
4000	,, ,,	500	0

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			Unused s. d.	Used s. d.
1879	4	Transvaal, Queen's Head, 1d., 3d., 4d., 6d.	—	8 6
1887-90	7	,, ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d., 1s.	—	3 0
1895	7	,, ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d., 1s.	—	3 6
	9	,, various	—	0 9
1900		,, V.R.I., ½d., 1d., 2d., 2½d.	0 10	1 0
1900		,, V.R.I., ½d., 1d., 2d., 2½d., 3d., 4d., 6d., 1s. ..	3 9	4 6
1901		,, E.R.I., ½d., 1d., ½d. on 2d.	0 9	1 3
1894-7	6	Orange River Colony, various	—	1 3
1900	6	,, ,, V.R.I., ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d. ..	3 0	4 0
1900	2	,, ,, on Cape, ½d. & 2½d.	0 3	0 6
1884	3	Stellaland, 1d., 3d., 4d. ..	3 6	—
1889-90	3	Swaziland, ½d., 1d., 2d. ..	1 9	4 0
	12	Various Cape of Good Hope, ½d.—1s.	—	0 8
	8	Various Natal, ½d.—1s. ..	—	0 7
1888-92	4	Zululand, ½d., 1d., 2½d., 3d. ..	1 6	2 0
1900	2	Mafeking, Bicycle and Baden-Powell..	—	18 0
1887	6	British Bechuanaland, ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d.	—	2 3
1891-4	5	,, ,, 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d.	—	1 8
1891-4	5	British South Africa, ½d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 8d. ..	—	3 3
1896-7	8	,, ,, ½d., 1d., 2d., 3d., 4d., 6d., 8d., 1s.	—	4 3
1898-01	5	,, ,, ½d., 1d., 2d., 6d., 1s.	—	1 4
1891-3	4	British Central Africa, 1d., 2d., 4d., 6d.	—	2 0
1896	5	British East Africa, ½a., 1a., 2a., 4a., 8a.	—	2 0
1897	9	Zanzibar, ¼ anna to 8 annas, complete	—	5 9
1890	6	Seychelles, 2, 4, 8, 10, 13, & 16 cents.	—	3 9
1894	14	Abyssinia, complete	3 0	—
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1892	8	Portuguese Africa (Vasco da Gama), 2r.—150r., complete	—	2 9
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1892	8	Madeira, Africa (Vasco da Gama), 2½r.—150r., complete	—	2 9
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1901	7	,, 2½ reis—50 reis ..	0 9	—

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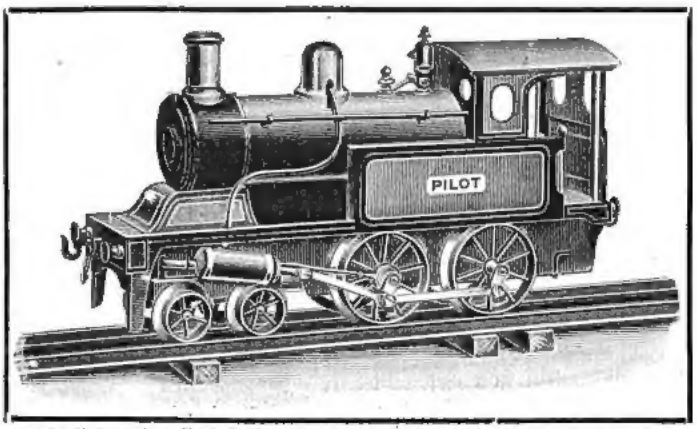

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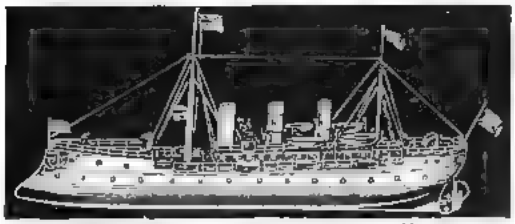

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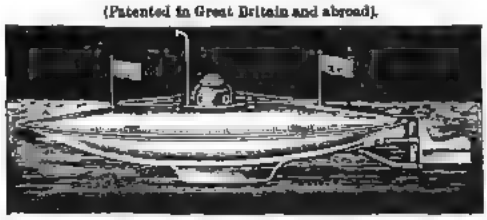

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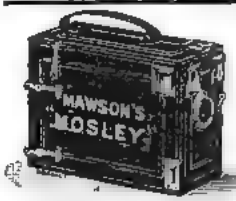

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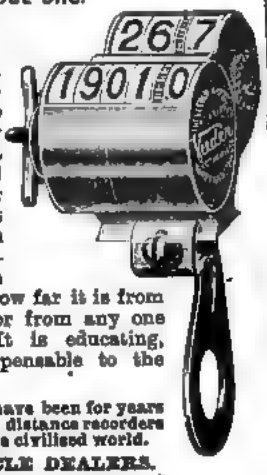

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THE CAPTAIN.

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The Editor does not hold himself responsible for any MSS., photographs, or drawings submitted to him, but when stamps are enclosed he will endeavour to return those contributions of which he cannot make use. Typewritten MSS. are preferred.

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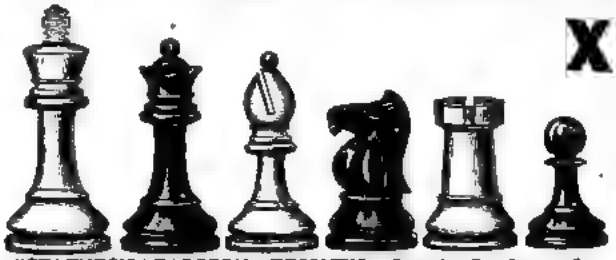

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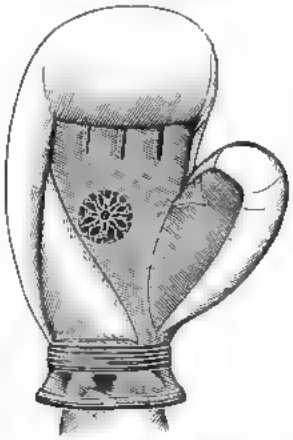

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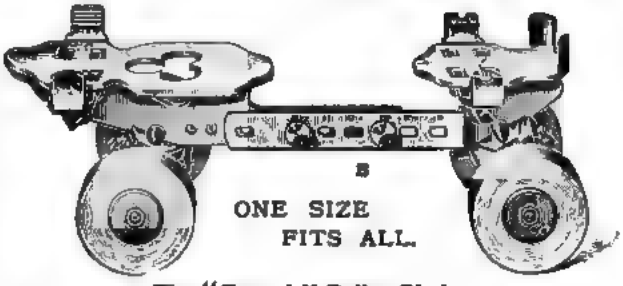

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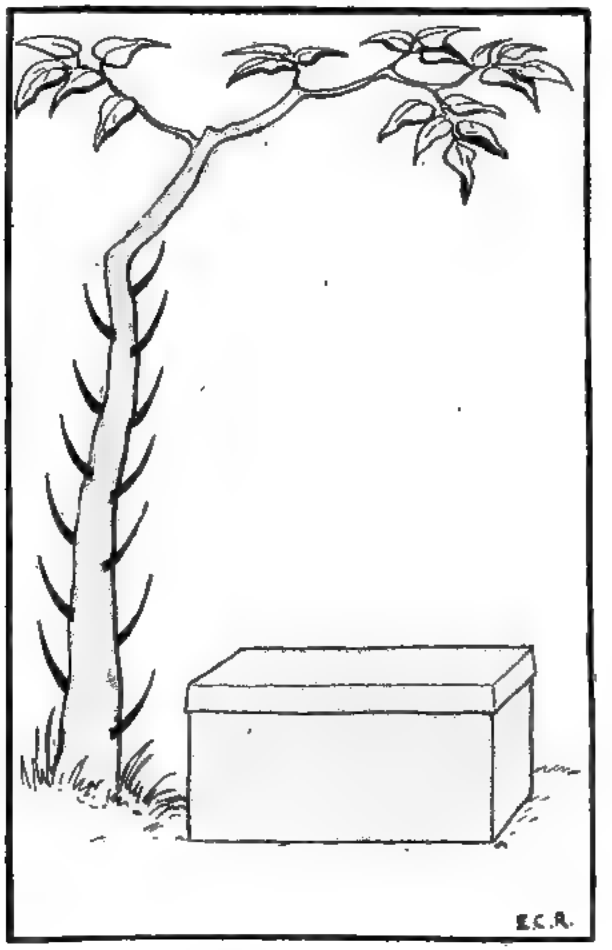


Take the thorns from the tree and put them together so as to form, in the simplest way, a man on the box.

Trace your drawing of the box—do not tear this page out.

(For further particulars, see page 283.)

"The Captain" Christmas Card.

THE OLD FAG WISHES YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS.

(Specially drawn for THE CAPTAIN *by Tom Browne, R.I.)*

THE LOST UMBRELLA

BY

The Rev A.N.MALAN. D.D.

HE was a very shabby, under-sized individual. His coat was green from long service, his trousers were short and shone with age. The fingers of his black cotton gloves were an inch too long; his shoes were evidently too large, and trodden down at the heels. He held a bowler hat, once black, but now of a melancholy mouldering hue, which harmonised with the colour of his coat. He had sandy, straight hair, a pale and pinched face, wide-open washed-out eyes.

The servant had announced him as wanting to see me. He had declined to give his name, but said he had called on important business. I told the servant to show him in, and a sound of shuffling footsteps was followed by the man's appearance in my study.

He looked about at the ceiling and walls. Then he looked at me, and spoke in a quick, flurried voice:—

"I've lost my umbrella—it was a new one—it cost half-a-guinea."

Again his eyes wandered over the ceiling and walls.

"Here's my card."

I took it, and read, "*Mr. W. Spinks*, 132, *Red Lion Avenue, Soho.*"

"Well, sir," I said, "what do you want? Do you expect me to look for your umbrella?"

"You couldn't find it—I lost it in Turin."

"*Turin!* I can hardly offer to go so far afield!"

"Just so—but you can let me have the value of it."

His wandering eyes were never still. I mentally set him down as a man of weak intellect, hard up, and too proud to beg in the ordinary way.

"In plain words," I said, "you want me to give you half-a-guinea."

"No—I can earn it."

"Do you want a job in the garden? I have nothing to offer you—my time is valuable—I must——"

He interrupted me.

"You write stories for boys—I've seen your name——"

"Well?"

He advanced a step nearer, and wagged the flapping finger of a glove at me.

"Look here," he said, in an impressive voice, "I can tell you how I lost my umbrella!" and he drew back with a curious leer in his pale eyes.

"Don't you see?" he continued; "if I tell you, you can put it down—they'll pay you for it—and you can give me a new umbrella, eh?"

So he was sane after all, or else he had method in his madness. He began to interest me.

"How did you lose it?"

"That's what I want to tell you. I left it in a building, and couldn't find it."

"Is that all? How do you imagine I could make a story out of that?"

"It's right enough—look here—if I tell you

and they pay you, will you give me a new umbrella?"

"I do not care to bind myself to any agreement—but, stay—if you like to tell me, and it seems worth writing about, I will send it on, and, if it is accepted, you shall have a new umbrella. But, if I don't think it worth the trouble, I shall have nothing to do with it."

"That's fair enough. I'll sit down, if you have no objection. I'm tired."

He sat down, and bent forward, holding his hat on his lap.

"It was like this. My sister married a rich man. They have a son, George—he's my nephew, you understand. He's at school. They asked me to take him abroad in the Easter holidays—paid everything. We went to Switzerland and Italy. What I'm going to tell you happened in Turin. It was like this:—

"There's a museum in Turin. It's the tallest and thinnest building in Europe, I should say—at least, so it looks. I made a sketch of it."

He took a leathern case from his pocket, and, having found the sketch among its contents, he handed it to me.

"There, you see, it seems to have outgrown its strength. Anyhow, there it is. We looked at the notice over the entrance, but it was in Italian, and we could not construe it. We went in. My nephew can talk French, and the man at the turnstile knew something of that language. He said there were a thousand and eight steps to the top. Think of that! A thousand and eight steps! Then he turned us adrift into a passage and left us.

"We came to a short flight of steps, about a dozen. Then straight ahead, and another flight, and so on, till we came to a door. It gave entrance to a hall, magnificent in its spacious proportions. I never saw such a majestic room. But it was full of emptiness, so to say, except that it was entirely blocked with gigantic scaffolding. There was something about it that made me feel shivery. The great stone pillars, with carved capitals; the noble arches; the lofty roof, with its decorated ceiling. You would have expected to see a swarm of workmen, busy as bees, upon the scaffolding, but there wasn't one. The silence froze your marrow. It reminded me of the 'Rime of the Ancient Mariner.'"

Mr. Spinks stood up, and carefully placed his hat upon the chair. Then, striking an attitude, he recited some of the lines in a tragic voice, and with dramatic gestures:—

> "Her lips were red, her looks were free,
> Her locks were yellow as gold;
> Her skin was as white as leprosy,
> The nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
> Who thicks man's blood with cold."

He must be a lunatic, after all, I thought—he seemed to be working himself up for some outburst of frenzy. To bring him back to the point, I asked what that had to do with his umbrella.

He glared at me with a terrific scowl, and wagged his finger-top of glove at me. After a brief silence, he went on again:—

> "Four times fifty living men
> (And I heard nor sigh nor groan),
> With heavy thump, a lifeless lump,
> They dropped down one by one."

Mr. Spinks imitated the ghastly performance by dropping down upon the chair, regardless of his hat. Then, with a startling shriek, he suddenly sprang up:—

> "I fear thee, ancient mariner!
> I fear thy skinny hand!
> And thou art long, and lank, and brown,
> As is the ribb'd sea sand. . . .
> I looked upon the rotting deck,
> And there the dead men lay. . . ."

He paused, and pointed to the floor. Then he sat down exhausted by the vehemence of his feelings. When he recovered, he said:—

"That was just to show you how I felt, while gazing at that great, grim, desolate hall. Well, sir, my nephew and I went on, up several other flights of steps—till we came to another door."

His voice sank almost to a whisper.

"What do you think? That door led into a second hall, even more palatial in its proportions than the first—enormously lofty, and crowded like the other with a maze of scaffolding—gaunt, mysterious, silent as death. There was not a sign of workmen's tools, or any hint of labour being merely interrupted by a holiday. It was as though death had swept out every living man. I would not spend a night alone in that hall—I should see troops of ghostly workmen swarm upon that scaffolding.

"Now, sir, if you look at the sketch,* you will see that those two halls occupy the lower part of the building. After passing them we began to mount the dome. So far the steps had been wide enough for two or three persons abreast; now they were so narrow that a stout person could only ascend sideways. Luckily we were both slim. The steps were packed close against the concave side of the dome. You looked up and saw the dome gradually sloping and drawing in overhead, as though it meant to close and crush you, like the terrible iron chamber in Poe's tale. The steps were laid

* See heading to this story.

true to the level, and were protected by a rail; but the narrowness of the steps obliged you to bend your body to suit the curve of the dome. You had to hold the rail, and lean over the abyss. My nephew said it made him feel seasick. He very soon gave up—he dared not go on. I don't wonder—it made me feel liverish, sir, liverish.

"'Well, George,' I said, 'you can stay here, if you like, and wait for me. One of us ought to see this show out. If you can't, I must.'

"'All right, uncle,' he said. 'I'll wait — but I can't go a step further.'

"So I left my nephew there—say, one twentieth part accomplished of the long climb. I bade him keep up his spirits—and, crooked in the curve of a scythe, I proceeded to mount higher. The stairs cork-screwed round the dome in flights leading to galleries. On reaching one of those galleries, you might turn right or left, and find a flight leading up to the next gallery.

"ALL RIGHT, UNCLE; I'LL WAIT."

"I had long since passed out of sight and hearing of my nephew. At times the steps were plunged in darkness, and I had to grope my way till it came again into light. There were port-holes at intervals. I had gone up in a haphazard sort of way, sometimes turning to the right on reaching a gallery, sometimes to the left. Then it occurred to me that I might miss my way coming down, and fail to find my nephew. Happy thought! Let me steal a hint from the Indians when threading the mazes of a forest. True, I cannot bark the walls, but I can mark the route by leaving some token at intervals. I would begin at once by hanging my umbrella on the rail by which I was standing. I would make a point of always turning to the right on reaching a gallery.

"After negotiating a few more flights, I tied

"MON NEVEU! MES HABITS! MON CHAPEAU! TOUT-A-FAIT PERDUS!"

my handkerchief round a rail. Further up, I was glad to leave my coat, for it was hot work—then my waistcoat. Onwards and upwards once more, leaving my hat and my handkerchief till I had done with the dome.

"Look at the sketch—I had reached the first gallery which goes round the spire outside. A superb view of the city and its surroundings lay spread out in the vast depth below, with the mighty snow mountains of Mont Cenis towering towards the blue sky. I revelled in the splendid panorama, walking round the gallery many times. Then I mounted a spiral staircase to the next gallery, and again I admired the view. I tied my braces round a rail, and nerved myself to scale what remained of the dizzy height.

"You can see from the sketch how slender the spire becomes. As I looked up, it seemed as though I could almost clasp it round the waist. There was a long iron ladder in place of steps. I mounted it halfway, and then—! Horror! horror! horror! I turned my head and looked down! As I think of it, the same feeling of giddysickness that came over me at that moment returns.

"I was paralysed with a terror which took all the strength out of my hands. My knees grew limp, my feet felt like cold lead, my fingers were numb. The agony was unbearable! I let go. By some instinct of self-preservation I flung my arms round the ladder, and the next moment I was sliding down, utterly powerless, sick with that fainting terror.

"Oh, dear sir, I thought I was killed! But I wasn't. I came with a rush and a crash against a stone pillar. My head was cut, my shirt was torn across. The bruises I sustained caused such physical pain that I partially recovered my senses. I staggered to my feet, impelled by the one desire to reach solid earth again. I seized my braces and began the descent. Dazed and bewildered I thought nothing of retracing my original course. I lost all method, turning now to the right, now to the left. I could not find my waistcoat, and plunged madly down any flight of steps. I could not find my coat, or my hat, or anything

As long as I continued getting downwards I cared for nothing. I shouted for George, and listened; but no answer came. I had no handkerchief to mop the blood which streamed from my wounded head. My torn shirt was dyed as red as Garibaldi's.

"At last I reached the ground floor, and I staggered to the turnstile entrance. The official was dozing in a corner. He jumped up and threw out his hands in amazement at my wild appearance. I brandished my braces and tried to make him understand. '*Mon neveu! Mes habits! Mon chapeau! Tout-a-fait perdus! Au secours!*' I gesticulated and pointed vaguely upwards. I glared at him, and gibbered, till the foam flew from my lips. I laid my hand on his arm, and tried to pull him into action. He resented. He assumed a warlike attitude. I hesitated.

"At last I induced him to follow me. We hurried up the steps, past the halls. I shouted 'George!' I was desperate!

"Relief at last! We suddenly came upon George lying comfortably asleep. Poor boy! he was blissfully ignorant of all my terrible experience. I roused him, and explained the bare facts. Then, with his superior French, he contrived to make the official understand the main outlines of the matter. The man went in search of my missing articles.

"To sum up briefly, he succeeded in finding everything except my umbrella. He said it might take him a month to search all possible places in which I might have left it. I gave him the address of our hotel, and charged him to find my umbrella and send it on. But he never did. That's how it was, sir."

Mr. Spinks rose from the chair, and walked abruptly to the door. As he opened it, he turned and said:—

"I cannot stop longer. Please forward the new umbrella to my address. Good morning, sir."

I heard him shuffle down the passage and leave the house.

The next day was showery. In the afternoon, when setting out for a walk, I could not find my umbrella. Strange coincidence! Where could I have left it?

Two days afterwards I received a post-card. It read:—

DEAR SIR,—As I left your house the other day, I noticed that your umbrella was very similar to the one I lost. It seemed in good condition. To save you the trouble of forwarding a new one, I took the liberty of appropriating it. With many thanks, yours truly,

W. SPINKS.

H'm! Rather cool! I thought. Was the fellow a common swindler after all? I communicated with the police. They made inquiries. There was no such street in Soho.

Well, I've got his sketch. There's nothing for it but to try the luck of sending it with his account to the editor of THE CAPTAIN.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR: "Hush—sh! Not so loud! Walls have ears!"
SECOND DITTO: "Ah! and even the potatoes have eyes! Be careful!"

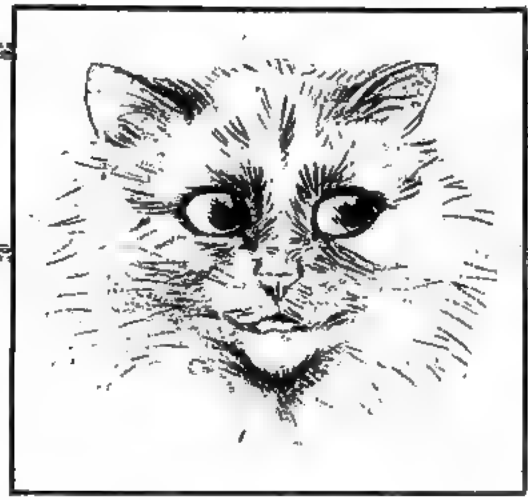
(They withdraw to the deeper blackness of the greengrocer's cellar.)

MR. LOUIS WAIN MAKING STUDIES OF EXPRESSION FROM HIS PERSIAN CAT, "PRINCE."

Photograph by George Newnes, Ltd

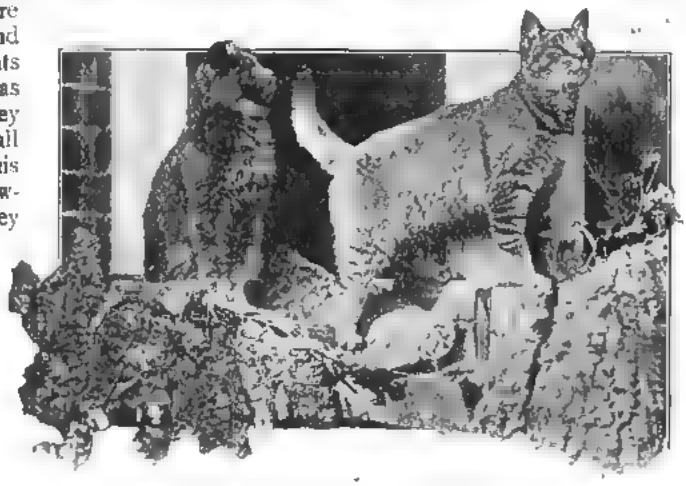
THE ART OF LOUIS WAIN.

By Paul Preston.



Study from Louis Wain's Note-book.

I HAD dined — and dined well—with the famous cat artist. Ere I retired to rest I drew my blind, and the moon's effulgence poured into my room. As I slept, I dreamed, and beheld cats innumerable—tom cats, she cats, Manx cats, Persian cats, Bunny cats, and last, one huge "brindled cat"—the identical animal, probably, which mewed thrice in *Macbeth*—dance around my bed. My host had been asking me some of those idiotic questions, probably to stave off those I wished to ask him, which have even more inane answers, and these and the cats got mixed, for, as they danced they sang, "When shall the moon of Louis Wain?" With awful iteration they dinned this question into my ears. I tried to sit up and think out an answer on correct lines, but the brindled grimalkin had left the rout, and had seated himself on my chest. He punctuated the song with the one word, "When?" which he pronounced with a grin which made me sure he was born in Cheshire, and which so exasperated me that, with a superhuman effort, I flung him off, leapt up, and drove the whole lot up the chimney—a direct, though unusual, route to their customary boudoir on the tiles.



TWO RARE CATS.

"Goblin," the cat sitting down, is a weird blue Persian, which was given to Mr. Wain by the Duchess of Bedford. The cat standing up is a "Bunny cat, with a coat like a rabbit. He is the rarest cat in England.

Photograph by George Newnes, Ltd.

Well, that's a dream picture, and Louis Wain is the only man in England who could realise it on a square of millboard with a bit of red chalk. He has dramatised the cat; he has made it human — impish, ghoulish, angelic, what you like, but human always, and therein lies his charm. He never paints a cat's portrait, on principle. It would not be one of Louis Wain's cats if he did, and his cats are unique, and exist nowhere save in his wonderful drawings.

In this connection, I said to him: "I heard a man say the other day, 'Louis Wain's cats are not like cats at all!'"

The artist smiled—he only smiles about twice a day on an average, for he is a preternaturally solemn man, although I have not the slightest doubt he laughs inside pretty often. "Well," he replied, "if my cats are not like cats, what are they like?"

I shook my head dolefully. "They are like nothing else," I said.

"Exactly," he replied. "I suppose I have

drawn in my time upwards of seventy thousand cats of all sizes and descriptions, in all positions, possible and impossible. I have represented them in almost every human relation from the cradle to the grave. I have drawn them engaged in every sport, from circus-riding to croquet. I have painted them as prattling infants and aged creatures, but I defy anyone to mistake one of my cats for any other known creature. Now, that is all I aim at. I am first and foremost a caricaturist. I represent foibles, failings, passions, pleasures, anything in fact but politics, by means of my cats, and I claim the caricaturist's right to exaggerate defects, emphasise features, and generally to use my subject for all it is worth, in order to bring out the special moral which the picture is designed to point, or to adorn the particular tale which I intend the picture to tell."

"BENDIGO," MR. WAIN'S HOUSE AT WESTGATE-ON-SEA.
Photograph by George Newnes, Limited.

I felt that this was good sense, and I made up my mind to give the grumbler afore-mentioned a very bad quarter of an hour the next time I met him, and, if I did not succeed in convincing him that Louis Wain was right and he wrong, I felt that he must be very dense indeed, and certainly devoid of humour.

Talking of humour, I am beginning to think that all humorists are of a saturnine visage. Mark Twain is one of the most serious of men, yet he has given two continents thirty years of laughter. Louis Wain takes life seriously, yet, the moment he sits down to his work, humour seems to bubble out of him. It must not be thought, however, that he is an ungenial man, although, when it comes to forcing him to talk about himself, it almost requires, like the Scotchman's joke, a charge of dynamite to set him going.

Catch him, however, by guile, and he will tell you many a good story. Here is one. Most readers of THE CAPTAIN will remember reading in the papers about Louis Wain's dinner to the vendors of cats' meat, so common an occupation in London, and so rare in the provinces. When he alighted at the door of the Strand restaurant, where the dinner was given, there was a vast congregation of small boys, who set up a dismal caterwauling in honour of their popular friend.

Even after he had seated himself at table, one of these urchins, who had by some means found his way inside, came upon all fours, arching his back, and purring round his chair.

Another story he told me was connected with the picture published as a supplement to *Myra's Journal*, some way back in the eighties. It is a long picture, representing almost every known species of cat, all singing a different tune, and is entitled, I believe, "The Cats' Concert." Louis Wain said: "The office cat at *Myra's Journal* took a dislike to the white cat in that particular picture, and used to stand in front of it and swear at it. One fateful morning the editor found a hole in the picture. The office cat had torn his hated white rival to pieces. He had evidently been exasperated beyond endurance."

"GOT A PAIN—TOO MANY MICE?"
From Louis Wain's note-book.

"Cats' concerts, by the way, are all very well in a picture," I said, "but when a really non-artistic corporeal cat calls his friends and relations from near and far, and locates himself and his clan upon your own particular tiles, one is

reminded forcibly of the immortal poet's words :—

"Hear the roof-tree tom cats' yells!
Defiant yells!
What a pack of petulance their intonation tells!
How they wrangle, wrangle, wrangle
In the middle of the night,
While their strident voices jangle,
Like a rusty, unoiled mangle,
As they settle to a fight,
Giving scratch, scratch, scratch,
In a frenzied feline match,
With discordant execration that continually wells,
Into yells, yells, yells, yells,
Yells, yells, yells,
From wrangling, and from jangling, into YELLS!

"The fact is, Mr. Wain, you may take it from me that it has needed all your skill to make the cat a social success."

Mr. Wain smiled for the third time that evening, and I felt that I had not lived in vain. But the serious aspect once more settled upon his countenance as he said :—

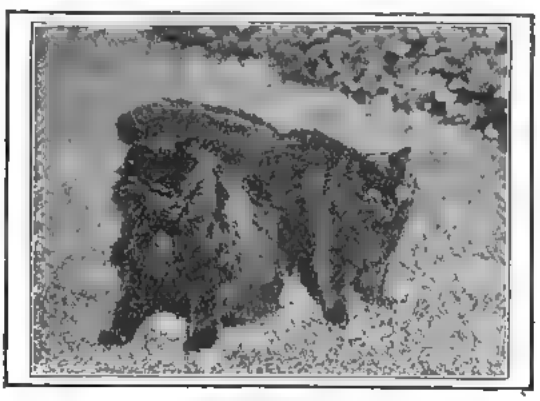
"Cats are like children, and are just as amenable to Solomon's dictum as they. If you train them up in the way they should go, they will not depart from it, *even* when they are old. I am really immensely interested in bettering both the breed and the treatment of our feline friends, and I know, perhaps as no other man knows, that there is no animal which so quickly and completely assimilates its surroundings, and the characteristics of the humans with which it associates, as the cat.

"There are still people who turn their cat out of doors of a night, without even the proviso 'weather permitting,' and, of course, such

"PATIENCE."
From Louis Wain's note-book.

A CURIOUS POSE. FROM LIFE.
By Louis Wain.

treatment has its natural effect upon the sensitive nature of a cat, and he becomes a hardened sinner. On the other hand, there are people who pet their cats to death, and I have even seen cats allowed to walk about the table and select the choice morsels which most appeal to their jaded appetites. Both courses are equally a mistake. The cat is none the worse for being properly disciplined, though it is never necessary to use any worse reprimand than can be conveyed by a look or the tone of the voice. Cats are extremely sensitive, and a reproof is never lost upon them."



TWO WATCH-CATS.

The cat in the foreground is "Prince," a black Persian, who was stolen from the Shah's palace in Teheran, the man in charge being beheaded for his loss. "Prince" was bought by an American in Paris for £100. The other black Persian is "Johnnie," a French cat, who with "Prince" acts as watch-dog at "Bendigo."

Photograph by Geo. Newnes, Ltd.

I sighed, perhaps a little unbelievingly, but as Louis Wain is one of the best judges of a cat in the United Kingdom, and has been President of the National Cat Club, I reckoned he knew more about cats than I did, so I at once included his views on cats among my articles of belief, in spite of everything to the contrary.

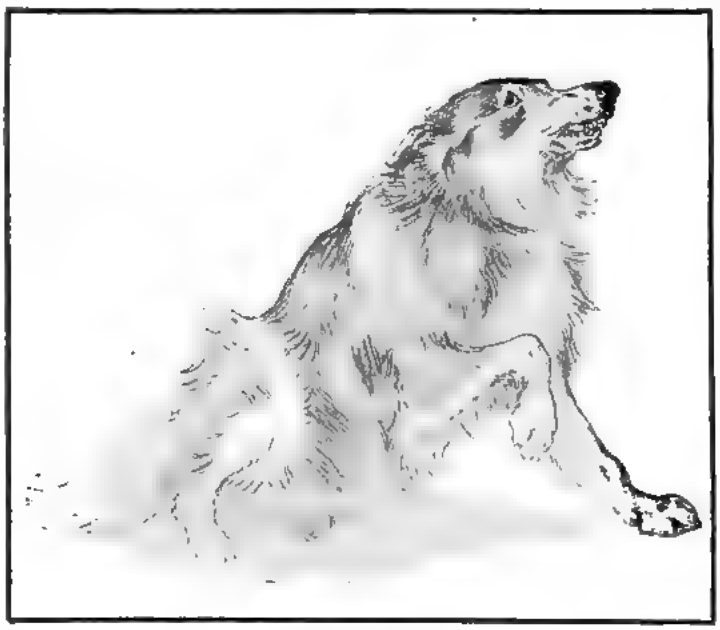
"But now, Mr. Wain," I said, "the readers of THE CAPTAIN will probably like to know how you do it."

"How I do it? Well, in the first place I get a bit of white cardboard, then I take a piece of chalk in my left hand—yes, and then I draw cats."

"Tell us how artistic contributors to the C.C.C. pages can draw cats—or, if it comes to that—dogs, and make money out of it?"

"There are two ways," said the artist, "and,

as in most things, the hardest is the best. Some young people who show artistic ability are able, by means of their friends and their social standing, to make a pretty early entry, and often a fairly successful entry, into the ranks of the profession. They get introductions to editors. They are occasionally able to organise a private exhibition of their work, or to have it included in a general exhibition in connection with one of the schools, and generally their path is strewn with roses. All I can say is that my career was not made in that way. For a long time, indeed, my path was strewn rather with thorns, but I am inclined to think, and think strongly, that the lad who has to fight for his bread and for his fame has a better chance, not only of capturing but of keeping his public, for in the fight he has developed those qualities of grit and indomitable perseverance which stand him in good stead when the inevitable time comes, as come it will, when it is touch and go whether he will crown the moderate success he has made with a lasting one, or whether he will lose his hold upon the public and drop back into oblivion.



STUDY OF A COLLIE DOG.
From Louis Wain's note-book.

"These are palmy days for the artist," he continued. "He is welcomed as a man and a brother. When I first started, the Bohemian taint was strong upon him, and the editor's sanctum was a sealed room as far as he was concerned. He had to be content to do his business through the engraver, and be well content if he received five shillings a drawing. That day is over, but the aspirant must not forget that where, in my young days, there was one artist, there are now fifty, and one's work must be extraordinarily good to get a show at all. I have found it a good thing to specialise. Editors and the public associate you with a certain class of work and type of subject, and, if you can do that one thing pre-eminently well, there will always be a market for your wares. I would not advise every boy to specialise in cats, but I would advise him to specialise in something, and be master of his subject."

"You get piles of letters, I see?"

"Yes, from all sorts and conditions. Boys write to me very often, and there are no letters I like better to receive, but if any of your CAPTAIN readers should write to me—and I hope they will—they must not expect long answers. I am much too busy even to write a long letter to a boy. I get strange letters sometimes. One old lady, who lived in Oxford, took in every stray cat and dog she came across. If she found a cat living a scratch sort of life—that's not a joke—she became a mother to it. Her theory was that a cat or dog that had had to fight for its existence, and had been personally acquainted with sorrow and starvation, was the more loving and kindly for its experience. There was one fly in her ointment, however. She found that these vagabond pets were intensely jealous of each other. She used to write to me, and her letters were a great curiosity. I used to call them my 'variegated letters,' because she associated a different colour with every animal in her establishment. If she wrote of Tommy, the cat, she used blue ink. If she wrote of Dash, the dog, she used green ink; if she wrote of herself she used black ink. This last, she explained, was by reason of the fact that all her people were dead, and she was in perpetual mourning. If in the middle of her letter she turned from talking of one animal to speak of

another, she changed the colour of her ink, so you may imagine the effect."

Louis Wain has a very jolly place at Westgate-on-Sea—where he lives—and the name thereof is "Bendigo." He has innumerable friends in every circle of life, from the peer to the peasant. His chief recreations are boxing and fencing, but, as all the rest of his household is comprised in four sisters and a mother, there is no one immediately to hand who is able to "take him on" at either of his sports, so, as he says, he grows a "little stale." But, as a matter of fact, he finds his most regular recreation in his garden, where he prides himself on growing every known English garden flower. In addition to his sisters, who are all capable and clever, and his mother, there are six other important members of the household as yet unmentioned. Four cats and two dogs. The latter are both pugs, and one of the cats, of the Bunny species, is wonderfully interesting, and is one of Louis Wain's most frequent models. At a word of command he will feign death. He will box and skip, and even stand on his head.

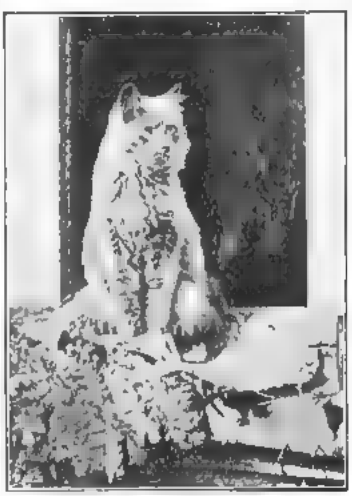
"And what about the future?" I asked. "Have you any new scheme hatching?"

"No," he said, "I am content to plod along on my old course, finding, as usual, infinite variety on the old lines. You may tell the boys of the new generation that if they are growing up jolly boys, healthy and hopeful, crickety and footbally, with just enough seriousness to make all these things help them to become men, then I shall go on drawing jolly cats; but if the boys of the new generation are going to wear spectacles, and mope too much over books, and become little wiseacres and stuffed museum specimens, then I am going to draw serious cats, gloomy cats, studious cats, old-mannish cats; so they had better make their choice quick.

"But, seriously now, I'll tell you what I would like to do. *If the readers of* THE CAPTAIN *will forward to the Old Fag an anecdote, joke, curious circumstance, or such like, connected with cats, I will place in his hands six original drawings, to be sent as a prize to the successful competitor.*"

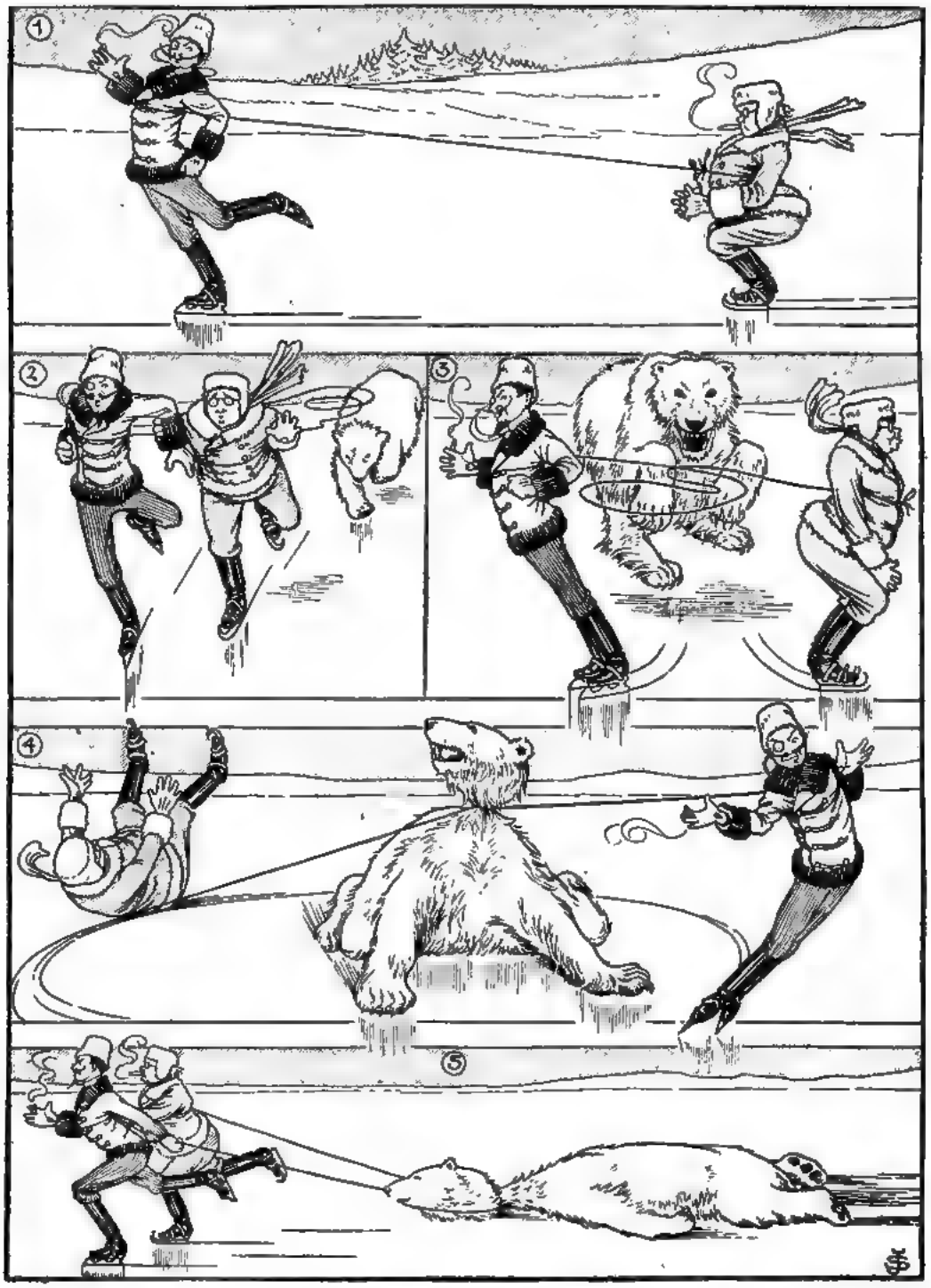
Thus ended a delightful interview. In his line there can hardly be a better example for British boys than this great cat artist. His initial advantages were nil, and yet, out of one unlikely, out-of-the-way, unappreciated subject—the despised pussy cat—he has made a name which is familiar all over the world; and, while it is true that he is to some extent a man of one idea, yet, like most men who specialise, he is able to do many things almost equally well. As a musician, for instance, he is exceptionally skilful. As a musical composer he is by no means unknown. As a short story writer he is well known, especially in America; and as an authority upon certain scientific subjects he is highly respected. So there you are! Talk about being Jack of all trades and master of none!—here is a man who is master of one and Jack of heaps—truly a happy condition.

A CHARCOAL STUDY.
By Louis Wain.



"GOBLIN."
Photograph by George Newnes, Limited.

"WHO SAID 'RATS'?"
A sketch from Louis Wain's note-book



WHY THE BEAR STOPPED LAUGHING.

Drawn by S. Jacobs.

A New Burglar Trap

by A. Blooper

Illustrated by Tom Browne, R.I.

"YES, sir, five years was quite long enough for me, although lots of my old pals have gone back for second and even third terms. But, thanks to you, sir, and folks like you, who meet a man on coming out and try to find him a job, I'm determined to continue this better way o' life, where, if the plums are not as big, they're sweeter, and the risks of gettin' 'em are *nil*. I agree with you, sir, when you say that a burglar needn't be a burglar all the days of his life, even if he has the prison taint on him. I've stuck to my guns two years, and I'm hopin' to do so to the end.

"I'd a long run—a lot longer than most o' my sort—without bein' caught, but the time came when I was nabbed—as it comes to all of us, sooner or later—gen'rally sooner. Ha! ha! I could burst with laughin' when I think about the way I was hooked, especially now that I've done my time, and am a free man once more. Yes, it was the rummiest go I ever heard of, bar none, and, as you know all about me, good and bad, already, I don't mind if I tell you the yarn :—

"I was on the holiday 'lay' at the time. That is to say, sir, I was paying visits to houses left either empty, or in the hands of careless caretakers, if I may so say, while the fam'ly was down by the sea, or maybe, in the country, shootin' an' such like, for it was the latter end of September. I'd spotted a certain house—just a middlin'-sized villa, close to the road—as a likely one for my next operations, and I'd made it my business, as usual, to learn a thing or two about its tenants.

"I got to know that, at this partic'lar time, only one person slept in the house, an' sleepin' was about all he did as far as I could learn. The house, as I told you before, sir, was not a big 'un, an' only a couple of maids was kept. Both these, however, had been given a fortnight's holiday, so that they would get 'em over a bit afore the fam'ly returned. So it happened that the son, a young fellow who was in business in the City, slept at the house, but took all his meals at his club. Rather a funny idea! But I daresay he didn't mind much for a short time, and it would seem better, I s'pose, than leaving the house entirely empty.

"However, I'd nothing to do with the fam'ly arrangements, only so far as they helped or hindered my schemes. The main thing as interested me was, that the young gent stayed at his club late, gen'rally until past midnight. I watched him in from the opposite side of the road, the night before I made an entrance, at half-past twelve. My plan was, then, to get into the place about eleven o'clock, when suburban folks gen'rally are indoors, and to get away, before the young swell got home, with anything light and valuable I could lay my hands on. I always thought 'discretion the better part of valour,' as they say, and although I've cleaned many a house out while the inmates was snoozing peacefully, I much prefer, as a rule, havin' the place all to myself.

"I needn't tell you how I got in. I almost forget. Gettin' in's the easiest part of my old profession, sir. Gettin' out's the ticklish part sometimes, as you'll see. But get in I did, by hook or by crook, and as I reckoned I'd about an hour an' a half to spare, I visited the pantry, thinking to line the inner man—forgettin' it would be as empty as Mother Hubbard's cupboard. I called myself a 'flat' for makin' such a mistake, but, while I happened to be downstairs, I prowled about a bit longer, pickin' up a few unconsidered trifles, an' then up I went to the dinin' and drawin'-rooms.

"Everythin' was covered up, an' I didn't wonder at the young gent spending his time at the club, for the rooms looked dismal and ghostly enough for anythin'. The moon was very bright, too, and flooded some of the rooms with light, while it made others, and certain nooks and corners, pitch dark.

"As everythin' was securely locked, as well as covered up, I thought I'd go upstairs first an' spy out the land a bit afore commencing more serious operations. You see, I wanted to spend my time, when I did begin, to the best advantage, and where I'd be likely to get most value in the smallest compass. So upstairs I started, to visit young master's room especially, to see if he'd left anything lyin' handy.

"I'd hardly got my foot on the first stair, when a key was inserted very quietly in the lock

of the front door. I went up then two at a time, I can tell you, thinkin' of dodgin' under a bed or something, until the young spark had gone to bed and the coast was clear. What had possessed him to return to such a dismal home at that early hour? I was thankful when he fumbled a bit with the lock—I guessed he'd been imbibin' a bit too freely or he would have caught sight o' my legs, for the front door opened on a widish hall right opposite the stairs, and the vestibule door was set back to the wall.

"The door swung open just as I reached the top of the stairs. The landin' carpet was up, and I daren't, for the life o' me, cross it. You know, sir, I didn't belong to the swell type o' cracksmen, though I wasn't one o' the lowest neither, an' so I wore thick boots. Right in front o' me, at the top o' the stairs, was what I took, at first sight, for a cupboard. The moon shone through a skylight right on the door. But when I looked higher I found it was a big, top-heavy, old grandfather's clock, the biggest I ever set eyes on, and before you could have said 'Peter Piper' I was in among the weights and pendulum!

"The clock wasn't goin', so I didn't think the young boss would want to wind it up. I guessed it was more for show—to set the head of the stairs off—than for use. Besides, even if I'd had time for second thoughts, which I hadn't, I'd have taken the risk, for, though it was mighty tight quarters, it was a jolly good hidin' place, an' one not likely to be suspected, even if the young man happened to get wind that there was someone in the house beside himself.

"At first I feared that I'd been seen to enter the house, and that he had come with the police, but the sound of a light step in the hall eased me of that fear. Then I hadn't started business yet, so, unless he went down to the kitchen, there was really nothing to arouse his suspicions, and not much even there, unless he was blest with better eyes than most men who haven't to get their living by their wits, so I guessed I was safe enough as long as I kept mum.

"I hadn't caught a glimpse of his worship yet, naturally, but I meant to get a peep at him as soon as he came upstairs. You must understand, sir, I didn't mean to do him any harm, except in self-defence. I never was that sort. I have carried a revolver once or twice in my life, but I gen'rally had a life-preserver in my hip-pocket. No, all I waited for was for him to get quickly to bed, as usual, and to pop off to by-bye as quick as he liked.

"I didn't think he'd be long downstairs, for what on earth was there to keep him? An' yet he stayed a weary time. I could hear him movin' about as if he was inspectin' the rooms to see if all was right, an' I felt glad, then, I'd got into the clock-case, for if he was in the habit of visitin' every room before going to rest, it was ten to one he'd look under the beds, an' in the cupboards, and any hiding-place but the one I'd luckily hit upon would have been unsafe. So, although

'BEFORE YOU COULD HAVE SAID 'PETER PIPER' I WAS IN AMONG THE WEIGHTS AND PENDULUM!'

my quarters was so narrow that I couldn't lift my hand even to rub my nose, which the dust in the old clock had made to itch and smart, yet I bore the cramp and the discomfort with a pretty good grace for me, knowing that I was a lot better there than runnin' greater risks.

"I wasn't likely to have to wait long now for a glimpse of my man, for he began to mount the stairs very deliberately and quietly. He was evidently a well-bred man, accustomed to gentle ways. I was sorry his step sounded so steady, for I'd hoped—not a very good hope you'll say, sir—that he'd bin havin' a drop, so that I should have a better chance, when he tumbled into bed, of gettin' off scot-free, an' takin' a bit of swag with me.

"The door of the clock prevented me seeing him as he mounted the stairs, but, bein' slightly ajar, it gave me a field of view on to the moon-lit landing, where I should have a good look at his back, at least, as he went towards one of the front rooms, where I reckoned he slept.

"But again I was disappointed. He took no more notice of the clock, as far as I could judge, than if it hadn't been there, although it stood very near the stairhead. The landing ran at each side of the staircase, and was protected from it by a balustrade around three sides. Then narrower passages, at each side of the wall the clock stood against, went to a backward extension of the house.

"He passed the niche so quickly that I only saw a shadow as it were, an' he went down the left-hand passage, and stayed somewhere there for another back-aching time. At length, however, I heard him returning, an' I got my eye on the landing ready to see him come into my field of view, as he made for the front rooms. Yes, there he was. He seemed to be going about without a light, but I didn't wonder much at that, as the moon was very bright, an' he was familiar with the house. He was not a big man by any means, so, if it came to a tussle, I shouldn't be overpowered by main force, at any rate. He seemed well dressed, but had rather a smart than a fashionable appearance, so far as I could judge in the moonlight. As I feared, he visited all the rooms, while I longed to get out an' stretch myself, but at last he went into one of the front chambers and seemed to be getting ready for bed at last. I could hear him fussing about, opening drawers and cupboards, but he took longer to settle than any man I ever heard of. I concluded it was the aristocratic way of goin' to rest, so I tried to grin while I bore it, although once or twice I had a notion of stealing out and goin' downstairs, as the odds was a thousand to one against his doing so again.

"However, a minute later I thanked my stars I hadn't acted on this thought, for no sooner had I finally dismissed it, than out came this strange young man from his room, as fully dressed as when he went in, and he seemed, to my startled imagination, to be makin' straight for the clock in which I was hidden.

"Now, whether it was this unexpected turn-up as threw me off my guard, or whether it was the itching in my nose had gradually worked up to an unbearable pitch, or both combined, I don't know, but, after struggling in agony for about five seconds, quite unable to lift a finger to check it, I sneezed like a thunder-clap. As if that wasn't enough to betray me, my head came with a bang against the door, which, flying open, caught the young gent on the arm as he was passing.

"I've seen men jump i' my time, sir, for wagers and otherwise, but 'pon my word, any of 'em would have a job to beat the jump he gave out of sheer fright. I've no doubt my sneeze sounded very hollow from the old clock-case, and he was nearly startled out of his wits. It wasn't my game to give him time to recover. I was bent on savin' my bacon, an' I made a grab for my life-preserver, at the same time as I made a jump to get out of the clock. I'm pretty thick-set, sir, an' I was in such a desperate flurry that, when I got one foot on the landin', I started for'ard as though I was free altogether. The result was my shoulders stuck a moment, and, struggling to force myself through the narrow door, I brought the top of the clock suddenly forward. It hit the young man, dazed enough already, on the head, and knocked him back'ards down the stairs; then, unable to recover myself, owin' to my entangled foot, the clock launched, with poor me half in and half out, down the stairs, like a toboggan with the rider underneath, rubbin' my face against every stair, until the clock bumped at the bottom, and shot my head with a bang up among the works.

"Clatter? I should think there was. It sounded to me as if all the house had tumbled on me. I was as fast as a thief well could be, for, although the door was open, I was head downwards, as well as face downwards, so, besides being a good deal hurt and dazed, I could get no purchase for lifting the clock with my back and crawling out. It was close quarters afore, but it was perfect agony and suffocation in the position I had been forced into now, and I gave myself up for lost, although, if I'd been able to chuck that bloomin' clock, I reckoned I could have made good my escape, for I could hear nothing of the young gent, and concluded that the fall had stunned him.

"Then the thought came that I'd killed him,

an' I began to sweat even more than before at the thought that I might be guilty of manslaughter as well as burglary, and yet here was I, helpless as a mouse in a trap.

"Perhaps five minutes passed. Everything was perfectly still. I'd resigned myself to fate, and given up struggling, both from despair and weariness, when I heard again the sound of a key turning in the lock of the front door. What could it mean? Had my young gent gone out quietly, after all, to fetch a policeman to me? I reckoned he must have a hard head if it was so. Yet, sure enough, there was the sound of the door opening, followed by the scratchin' and splutterin' of a match. A moment later the works of the clock, among which my head had been jammed, came dimly into view, as the hall lamp was lit.

"'Well—I'm—blest!'

"I couldn't pretend to tell you how much surprise those three words expressed. This was a newcomer evidently. But who? Then I heard footsteps hurryin' to the door again, and a shrill whistle, followed by:—

"'I say, Parkinson, a job for you, ol' fellah!' and the crunching of number twelves on the gravel outside.

"'Did you evah see, in all your born days, such a sight?' said the first voice.

"'It's a fair capper,' said the bobby.

"'How on earth did he contrive to knock himself downstairs with my grand-dad's old clock?' said the first again.

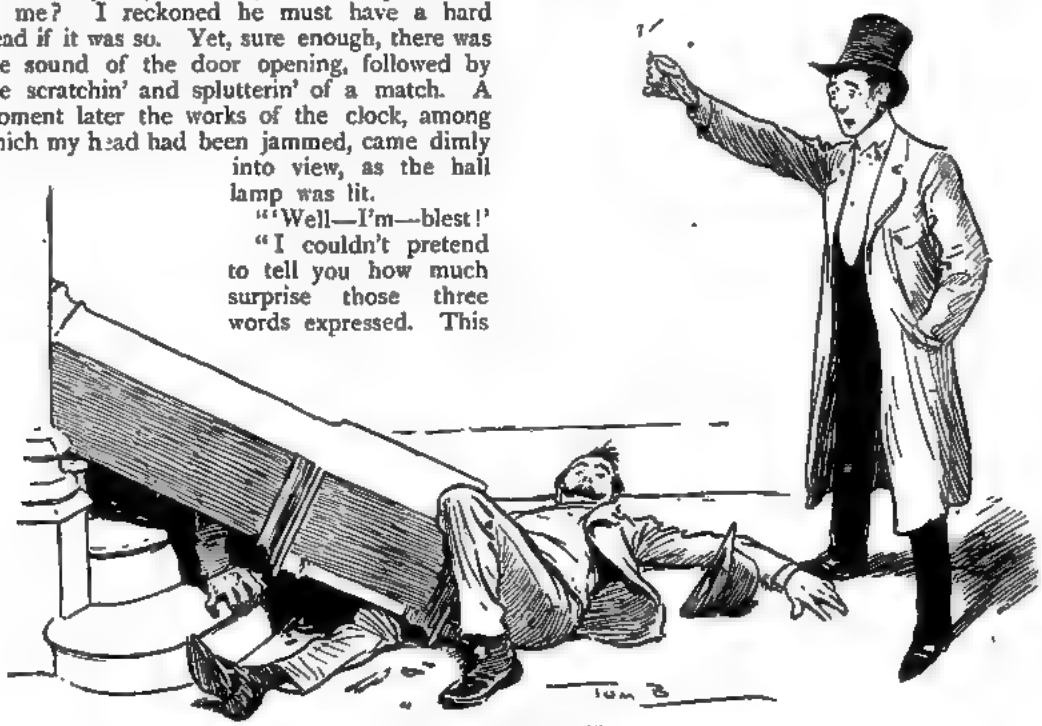
"'Nay, sir, ask us another—easier,' said the peeler, evidently grinning.

"'He's one of your swell cracksmen, I guess, Parkinson, eh?'

"'Naught else, sir. But let me clap th' bracelets on, sir, afore he comes to!'

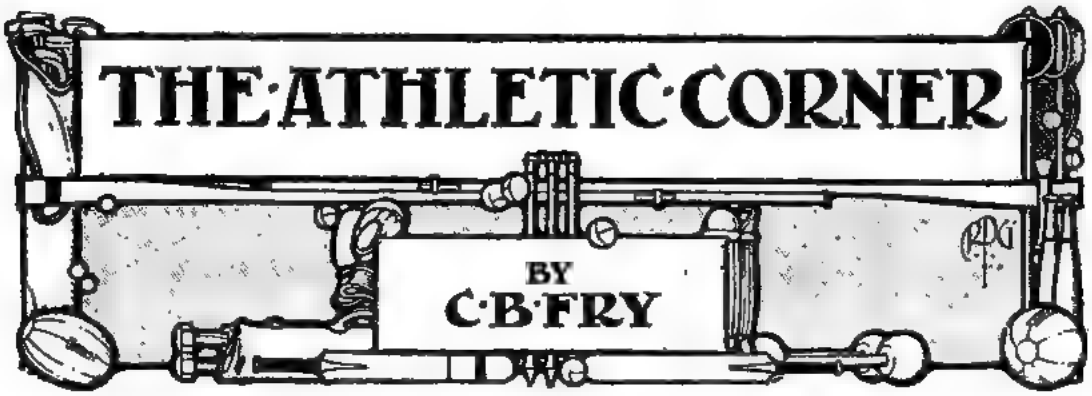
"'Right! That's the sort for him. Yes, he's safe. Now give me a lift with the heirloom, Parkinson, and then we'll try to bring him round.'

"I'd tumbled to it with a vengeance, and I could have kicked myself for the biggest ass in creation. There I'd been act'ally dodgin' one o' my own kidney—another burglar!—only one o' the swell sort. And now, as if to add insult to injury, if these two unsuspecting men—the young master and the bobby—didn't suddenly lift the head of the clock shoulder high, and, consequently, as the foot rested on the sixth stair or so, out I dropt like a kernel out of a nutshell, and so surprised 'em that they let fall the blessed thing on top of me again, and nearly killed me outright!



"WELL—I'M—BLEST!"

"It seemed a nat'ral consequence, after being trapped by a clock, that I should do 'time,' an' I got five years. The swell cracksman, whom I caught, but got no credit for catchin', got twice as long, for he'd been sadly wanted for some time, on account of half a dozen jobs of much more importance than the one he was on when I met him. So he's still goin' upstairs daily, at a slower pace by far than he came down that night, with your humble servant in a clock case at his heels."



AN IMAGINARY MATCH.

By an Imaginary Spectator.

YES, I've been to the "Great Glass House." Cat show? No! Football match — Lipton Charity Shield — Athenians *v.* Bladeton United. Best game I ever saw. No, the "pros." didn't win. It was a draw, one all. The Athenians scored in the first ten minutes. Philip put it through, but J. O. Faber made the opening. After that it was neck and neck all through. Just after half-time Dyke miss-headed the ball against the wind, and Feedham made a hard, long shot across the goal; it curled into the corner.

Yes; full teams. Here is a card:—

The Athenians: W. Scott (goal); H. V. House and W. J. Ashley (backs); W. R. E. Ford, M. D. Dyke, and A. Rector (half-backs); C. J. Flare, C. Philip, J. O. Faber, R. C. Berdling, and A. Serf (forwards).

Bladeton United: Houlke (goal); Abel and Rickett (backs); Boswell, Warren, and Feedham (half-backs); Church, Hazel, MacPen, Jeffries, and Huson (forwards).

I cannot tell you every move in the game, but I can yarn what I thought of the sides. They were on their metal and went for all they were worth. It was exciting all through. I thought the Athenians would win, but they could not quite last the pace. It teaches you something to watch a game like that.

The most striking point in the match was the half-back play of the northern team. I never saw anything to equal the soundness, efficiency, and brilliance of the trio, both individually and as a line. Yes; it is no crab on the southern halves to say that had the sides exchanged half-backs the Athenians would have won easily. But it is nearly always the same story; in a match between a crack amateur and a crack professional team it is the halves that make the difference.

However, there would not have been much difference in this respect between the Athenians and most professional teams. The Bladeton trio are super-excellent—they were always in their places, at the right spot at the right moment, yet never trespassed on one another's domain. The individual work of each was noticeably fine, yet the three worked together with the mechanical accuracy of parts of an engine. They were on the ball like lightning; the Athenian forward line seemed scarcely to have a fair chance of getting away. Their tackling, too, was wonderfully clever and effective; they scarcely ever missed their tackle, and when they did were round worrying at the ball in an instant. They seemed to do the work of six men, so ubiquitous was each in his own sphere. They could kick, too; it was a tremendously long kick with which Feedham cleared when Houlke ran out of goal and Ford returned the ball into dangerous proximity. How Feedham got there I cannot think; but he does those things—he is a genius at turning up in the nick of time. Then, again, how clever they were with their feet, and what perfect control they had over the ball! Each of them dribbled and passed with a subtlety and accuracy almost equal to J. O. Faber's best efforts. Feedham was the prince of them. I expect he would get his international as a forward did he not prefer half-back.

But the best part of their work was their passing to their forwards. Every time one of them got the ball he managed to pass it to advantage, so that the forwards had a chance of making ground.

So good was this defensive work that the backs had more free kicks than not: so good

their attack that their forwards never had occasion to come back to get the ball; it was always given them, so they were always fresh for making a telling effort.

If these halves had one fault, it was that they took too much upon themselves. They did not let their backs help them enough. This superb trio could do it; but the game they play would scarcely be successful in the case of half-backs less skilful, or in less splendid training. There was not enough combination between halves and backs. The latter seemed to lie rather too far away to be thoroughly in touch with the halves. Consequently, when the Athenian forwards did get past the opposing half-back line there was an open space in which they were able to pull themselves together and get well off before the backs could reach them.

The Athenian halves and backs played together as a quintet. The backs were always in touch with the halves. So, though the amateur halves were not so clever, accurate, or brilliant as the professionals, the defence as a whole was equally sound and powerful. Had the Bladeton United halves and backs co-operated as completely their defence would have been more impregnable. The goal Faber scored was due to his beating Warren and then having room to get up pace before Rickett could tackle him, and a neat pass to Philip did the rest, for the back was obliged to rush from goal to stop Faber.

The fault of the Athenian defence seemed to be that the backs played so close up to the halves that a long forward pass could be placed judiciously behind the backs, so that the Bladeton wings could rush through. To save, the backs had to sprint like hares, and then turn right round to clear. As it happened, both the Athenian backs were very fast, faster than most forwards, so they could play close to their halves with some impunity. But this method would be dangerous were they a trifle slower.

The amateur halves did not feed their forwards quite as well as did the pros., so the forwards had to work harder for the ball. I think that is the reason they tired somewhat in the last quarter of an hour.

I told you how completely the Athenian backs co-operated with their halves. That put them, to my mind, a point or two above the pro. pair. But they also seemed to me to be better kicks. They kept the ball much lower than the pros. did, and placed it more judiciously for their forwards to take on. Sometimes Ashley drove the ball clean along the carpet, right through to Flare or Faber. The Bladeton backs nearly always kicked hard and high, and, as a consequence, their forwards had less chance of getting the ball; the Athenian backs and halves had time to dash in and clear. Still, the pro. backs were fine kicks, and wonderfully strong, determined tacklers, rather better, I think, at engaging a man who had got away with the ball than were Ashley and House. On the other hand, the latter were quicker and more frequent in nipping in at the right moment and at intercepting passes. All four were grand at heading the ball, but I think the pros. were a trifle the cleverer in front of goal. Both the amateurs tried several difficult kicks where the other two would, I am sure, with less risk, have used their heads. By the way, I forgot to say that the Bladeton halves were perfect demons with their heads. They seemed as useful with them as with their feet; and, my word! their foreheads do drive; the hard part, you know, just where the hair begins. Heading makes my head-ache, but I expect I take the ball too much on the top.

As for the forwards, the pros. were wonderfully clever, neat, and tricky. They had the ball oftener, and kept it among themselves longer than the amateurs did; but they did not make as much ground—did not go ahead as straight and quick. They piffled a bit. When the Athenians got the ball they went through in some style; right for goal on the nail. The Athenian centre, J. O. Faber, was the best forward on the ground, by a class. He knows and can do everything. Resource and versatility—well, he is a marvel! Long or short, the pass always went right. Now a tip to the inside man, now a long drive to the outside, now a feint and straight through himself. Consummate individual skill, yet not a touch of selfishness. He kept the whole set of forwards working like one man.

The amateur forwards were not as unimpeachably accurate as the pros., but had more dash and speed. The pros. attacked in a sustained series of short passes, and seemed to want a certainty before they tried a shot. The amateurs went ahead with all sorts of passes, mostly rather long, and well in front. They were oftener tackled and dispossessed than the opposing set, but when they got going they were more immediately dangerous; and they shot at the very first opening.

Of course, in criticising the two teams one must remember a thing or two. They play under different conditions, and are rather different in material. Up north they play most of their matches on muddy grounds, where that short tricky passing pays. The amateurs mostly

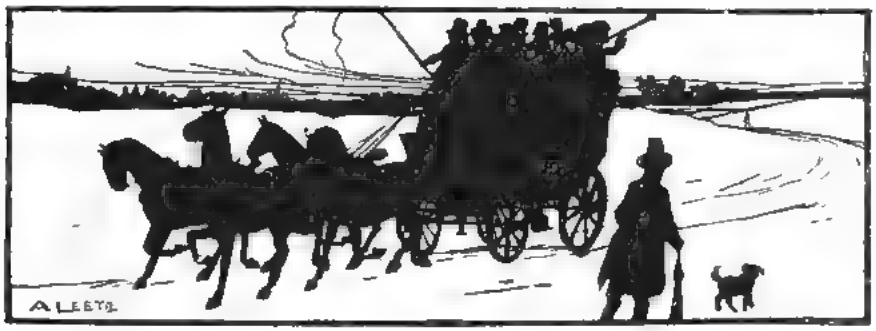
perform on a stretch of fine turf, where long passing and fast running is at a premium. Then, again, as a set the amateurs are faster and heavier than the pros., and can adopt a style of defence and attack that suits speed and weight.

Both goal-keepers gave fine exhibitions of skill. Scott is a small man, but extraordinarily active. Houlke weighs about 18st. and has a huge reach. Scott tries to catch everything; Houlke is fond of punching. The former missed his goal by trying to catch a ball he could not quite reach with two hands, but might possibly have punched away with one. The latter's mistake was the opposite; he punched at a ball he would almost certainly have caught: he did not hit it full in the middle, and it glanced up into the corner of the net. He laughed, but I think he was sick. He was a trifle over-enterprising now and then. The amateur backs several times passed back to Scott when they were in difficulties. The pros. did not do that. Both goal-keepers kicked off well—not down the centre of the ground, but right out to the wings.

It was a great match between two sporting sides. I don't know which I would back in the re-play. There is not a pin in it. The pros. last better, but you never know when a chap like Faber will not shoot an impossible goal. What a marvellous team you could get by picking the best men from each side. It would never be beaten.

Yes; I'll see the next match.

C. B. Fry



JOLLYBOY'S CHRISTMAS.

OH, Christmas is blithesome and jolly,
It ousts dumps and dull melancholy,
Not a sorrow or care—
And I have my fair share—
But is off at the sight of the holly!

It's good-bye to the work and the worry,
So one cannot help being merry;
It's hurrah for home joys,
With the girls and the boys,
Singing "Hi-diddledy-di-down-derry!"

Though old, yet I don't mind the weather,
Let it rain, snow, and hail all together,
Well, I care not a pin,
For we're jolly within,
And my heart is as light as a feather.

If it's just in the humour, it freezes,
Then I feel in such spirits, it eases
My mind when I take
A friend's hand to shake,
To give it a few extra squeezes.

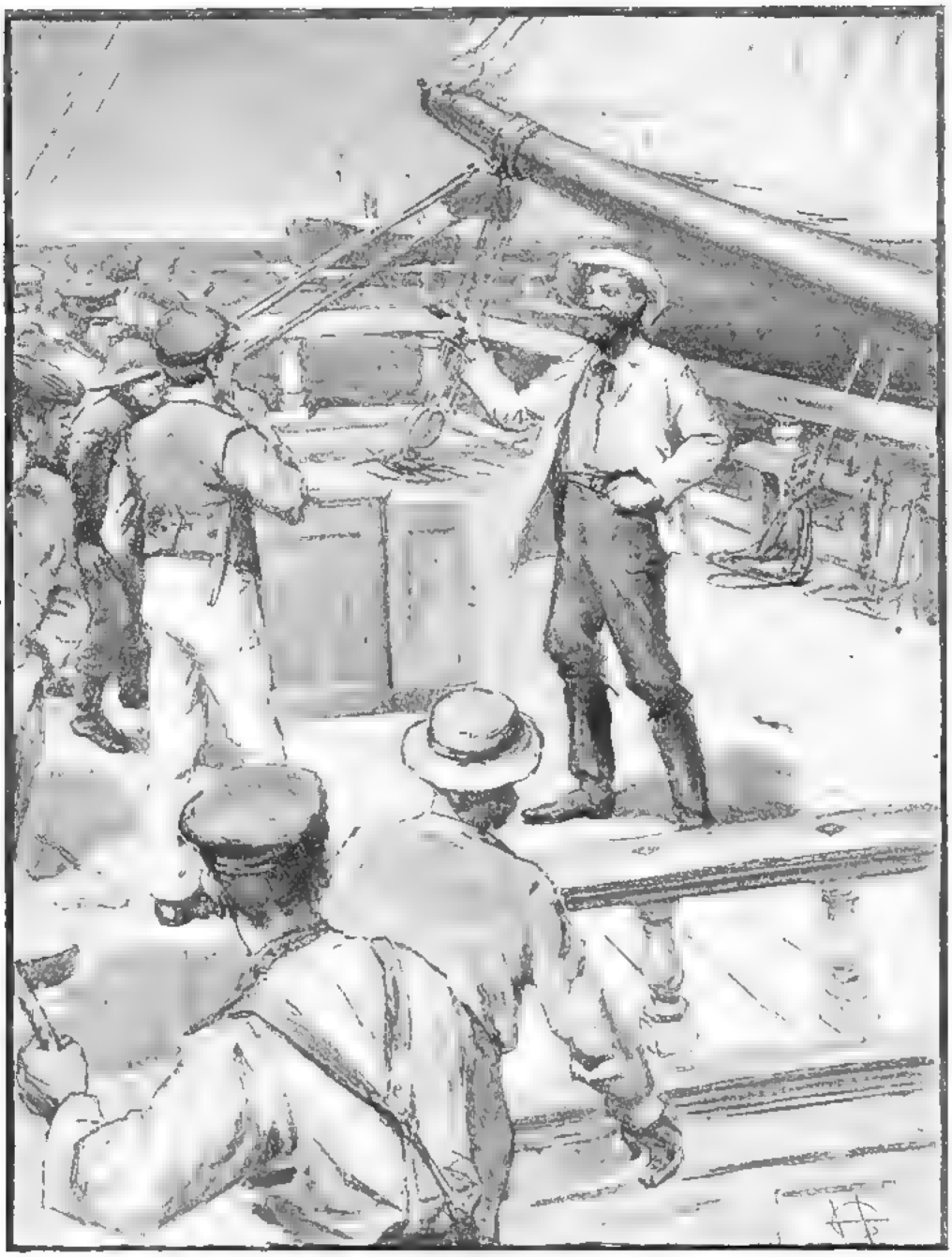
My efforts at skating are humble,
And my bones are a bit apt to grumble,
But I run with the rest,
And can slide with the best,
And how we all laugh when I tumble!

When the bell rings the hour for dining,
For turkey and pudding we're pining;
So away we all burst,
As I cry, "Who'll be first?"
Till my face beats the silver for shining.

And what can be brighter or better
Than to get a nice card or a letter!
It makes my heart heave,
Ev'ry gift I receive,
And I feel I'm to friendship a debtor

So I wish you the joys of the season;
If you want to be glad you'll find reason,
For Christmas-time brings
Such troops of good things,
To be doleful or dull is rank treason.

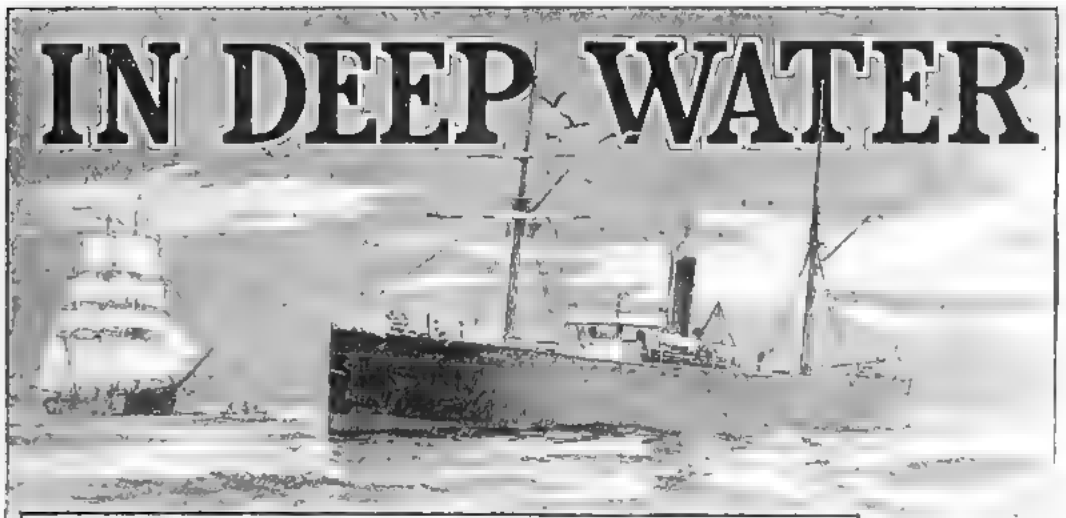
A. B. C.



"THAT STEAMER ASTERN THERE HAS A CREW OF DRUNKEN MEN BOYS, I PROPOSE WE JUST SWAP SHIPS."

Google

IN DEEP WATER



A Tale of the Mid-Atlantic,

By Stacey Blake and W. E. Hodgson.

Illustrated by George Hawley.

This story concerns the fate of the ss. *Creole* (belonging to the well-known shipping firm of Grimm, Channing & Grimm) and of the *Creole's* second mate, Grant Heath. Hudson, captain of the *Creole*, undertakes to get rid of Grant Heath, against whom Martin Grimm, junior partner in the firm, bears a grudge, and afterwards scuttle the *Creole*, which is heavily insured, in return for a bribe of £3,000. While Martin Grimm and Hudson are discussing the scheme, their conversation is overheard by Edith Hopewell, niece of Mr Channing, the senior partner, who is lying at the point of death in his house at Hampstead. Grant Heath goes aboard the *Creole* at Cardiff. Finding the ship in a great state of disorder, as the crew, having signed on, are spending their advance notes ashore, it is with difficulty that the two mates get any of the men to come and work. Captain Hudson, arriving just as the ship is ready, sees the new second mate and treats him roughly. Once the voyage has begun the crew find they are to be almost starved, and mutiny—but as they are calling at the Azores the captain gives them money, which they spend in drink, and the voyage proceeding, the crew neglect the ship, and Grant Heath, when taking in awning poles, is knocked overboard by Captain Hudson. From this time all on board drink heavily, and navigation is neglected—the crew lying about the decks in an unconscious condition—when a barque, the *Stella*, heaves in sight flying signals of distress. Getting no answer from the steamer, the captain and one of his men come aboard the *Creole*, and finding the whole crew in an unconscious state, the captain of the barque conceives the idea of transferring the crews. Chapter IX. opens with the Yankee captain overhauling the *Creole*.

CHAPTER IX.

A CHANGE OF CREWS.

CAPTAIN HOWELL passed down into the saloon. The same disorderly evidences were there, but they were on a grander scale.

Bottles, broken spirit cases, straw envelopes, broken glasses, and cigar stumps lay scattered about, the polished mahogany of the table was scored with knife gashes, and the mirror that stood above the stove and the chimney of the hanging lamp were both smashed to atoms.

He stepped over the débris to the skipper's berth. Hudson was lying in a stupor. Thence Howell went into the pantry, and nearly fell over the recumbent form of the steward. The Yankee gave him a kick, but he only grunted in reply.

Then they turned into the mate's berth, where that officer lay quietly in his bunk, amidst the fragments left over from his last few meals.

Howell glanced briefly at the sleeping man, and the fittings of the berth.

"First mate," he snapped. "Durned hog! And I guess that'll be the second's berth over there."

He flung open the door. The berth was empty, and it contained none of the evidences of dissipation that characterised the other quarters. Some clothing hung on the pegs, a pipe lay on the locker, and there were indications of some refinement in the choice of books that occupied the shelf over the bunk. There was a chest lying beneath, on which were imprinted the initials "G. H.," and there was a photograph of a rather pretty girl tacked to a panel by the door.

His sweeping eyes took all this in at a glance, and it conveyed to him instantly that his scheme for seizing the *Creole* might at any moment receive a check. For it was a different manner

of man who had occupied this berth, a man who would be sober and vigilant, very likely a gentleman. He passed amidships to the mess-room and engineers' berths, vaguely uneasy lest he should find the second mate there—but those apartments were empty.

Down in the dim forecastle all was squalid confusion. From the seas that had washed down during the rough weather, the floor was still wet; empty and broken bottles lay about in the utmost confusion. Most of the men were in their bunks, some curled up curiously in strangely distorted attitudes, with arms flung this way and that, but all sleeping heavily.

"Sakes alive! I'd whip the hide off every skunk of 'em!" muttered Howell, as he stepped up the ladder.

He stood and glared round the ship. He looked as if it were in his mind to drag the crew up and thrash them into sobriety; then the ferocity on his face changed to a hard smile.

"Bar the second mate turning up," he said, speaking to the bo'sun (for there still stuck in his mind that the officer whom he had not accounted for, had, for some reason or other, not joined in the ruinous orgies), "the thing's as good as done."

"You are going to seize the ship, sir?"

"I am, Sawbatch, and I calc'late in a way you wouldn't guess, sure. Git one of the men aboard with you, and give the ship a clean searching. I want to find where this second mate 'as hoofed it to. Meanwhile, I'm just going below to look up the articles. Now git!"

The first move of Captain Jasper Howell was to scrutinise the log-book. He glanced down the entries, and found that they ceased five days before, which was a pretty good indication of the time when the disorder on the vessel reached its acute stage. Going back on the dates, he discovered something that brought an exclamation from him.

"Singe my skin! Why didn't I overhaul this first?" he said, a light breaking over his face, and then he read out the entry recording the loss of Grant Heath overboard five hours out from Fayal.

After a swift survey of the ship's papers, Captain Howell discovered a most interesting thing. He found that, taking away the three engineers of the *Creole*, *except* for the missing second mate, the respective crews of the two vessels were identical in number. On the *Creole's* books were entered the master, mate, and second mate, three engineers, donkey-man, five firemen, a similar number of seamen, a steward and a cook. On the *Stella*, the difference lay in the preponderating number of seamen; but the respective aggregation of men aboard the two vessels, except for the difference named, resulted in crews of equal number. A few more facts digested, and Captain Howell went on deck. He slipped into his boat with eyes afire.

"Row, boys, row; there's good grub ahead for you," he shouted, "and plenty of it!" Then, for very impatience, he laid hold of a spare oar and straightened his back to a powerful stroke.

A rope ladder was lying over the ship's side, and Howell bounded up it as the bo'sun caught hold with a boat-hook.

"Skip below, Mr. Skinner," he cried, almost before he had set foot on the deck, and when that officer hastily followed, curiosity so consuming him that he forgot to put into words a joke that he had prepared during the skipper's absence, he found the ship-master straightening out a piece of paper on which a list of names was jotted.

"The derelict?" began the mate.

"Has a crew aboard of nineteen hands," answered Howell, indicating the paper on which he had made a list of the steamer's crew.

"Then she is disabled?"

"As sound as a rivet. But the crew, Mr. Skinner, are just lying about like smoked-out bees. They've been letting the liquor run, and I guess they're just sleeping it off. But I'll tell you what I'm going to do. If the boys are willing—'cos we shall all have to be in this deal—I'm going to swap this old hulk of a coffin ship for that seaworthy steamer; take our crew aboard there, and bring those hogs here, and leave 'em to work the ship as best they can when they gits their addled brains cleared up."

"What? Pirate the ship, sir?"

"Waal, I calc'late some people might call it that, but the word ain't in my vocabulary."

"But what about engineers? There's no one on board here, I reckon, that could work a steam-whistle."

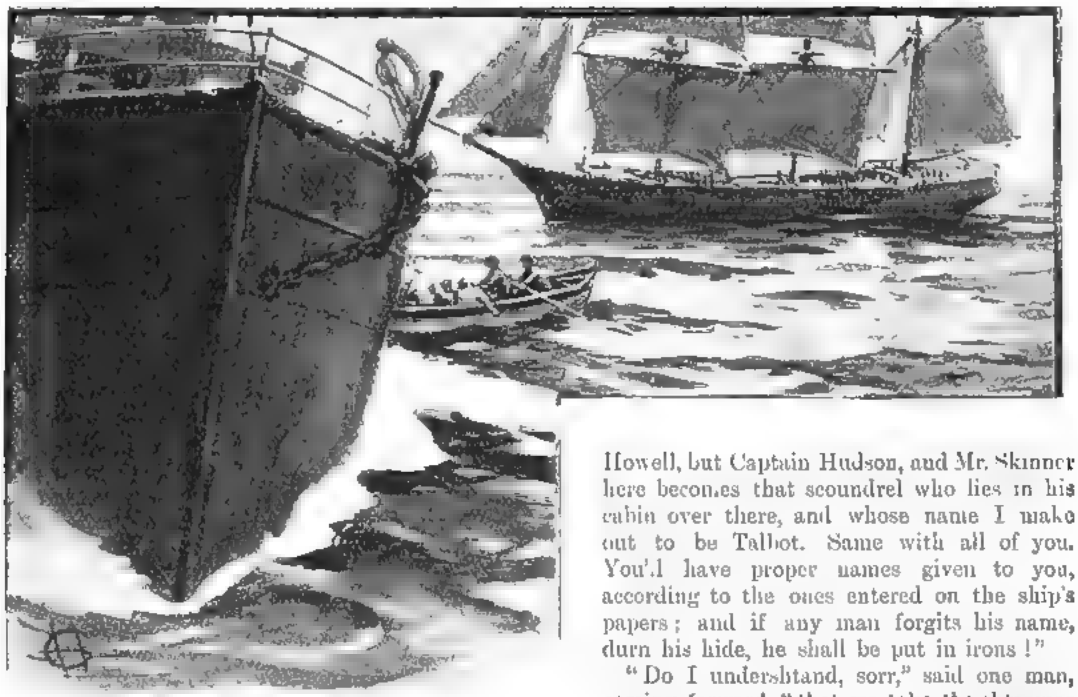
"No! I guess we shall have to keep the engineers aboard, and some of the men will have to turn to as stokers, which ain't very skilled labour. Now, Mr. Skinner, jest pipe the men aft."

It was Captain Howell's habit to harangue his men at every opportunity, and he had done it on an average three times a week since the ill-fortuned voyage began, so the men gathered on the poop expecting news of little import. The ship-master stood with stiffened legs before them, blowing out clouds of smoke through his whiskers.

"Boys," he said, tilting his hat back, "I've a notion you've starved and thirsted long enough."

A low murmur of approval came from the men.

"*And*," he continued, pausing to draw at his cigar with a long suck, "I've tumbled across an idea that should not only give you a good time, but a sound ship under your feet, which you ain't had for many a week. That steamer astern there has



THE FIRST LOAD TO LEAVE THE STEAMER.

a crew aboard of drunken men. They're all lying like so many logs, with all the stores and tackle around 'em that we're starving for the want of, and a seaworthy vessel that will go to the bottom at the first blow of wind. I propose that we just swap ships. We'll take possession of the steamer, and dump its crew aboard here. They won't know how they got here, because we shall be hull down to 'em before they've come to, while we will navigate just as if the ship was all our own. Those who like the idea will just put up their hands.'

As a result, every hand shot up, and the skipper resumed '—

"There are three engineers aboard, and o' course we shall have to keep them, but the move is conditional that five of you agree to serve as stokers."

"Aye, aye, sir!" assented a dozen voices.

"That's all right. Another thing I want you to remember is that the number of men aboard this yer vessel is about the same as that, and to make things slick it will be necessary that you change all your names for the ones that are on that ship's register. For instance, the skipper of that craft, I figure it out by the ship's papers which I have in my pocket, is called Samuel Hudson. Well, as soon as I get on board that vessel, I'm no longer Captain Howell, but Captain Hudson, and Mr. Skinner here becomes that scoundrel who lies in his cabin over there, and whose name I make out to be Talbot. Same with all of you. You'll have proper names given to you, according to the ones entered on the ship's papers; and if any man forgits his name, durn his hide, he shall be put in irons!"

"Do I undershtand, sorr," said one man, coming forward, "thot we take the shteamer into port as if we wuz th' proper crew?"

"You've tapped it, Kelly, first time."

"And phwat will my name be, if ye plaze, sorr?"

Howell glanced at the paper on which he had copied the names and ratings of the *Creole's* crew.

"The cook on board that vessel is called Hans Spaander," he said.

"Whirroo, sorr! Ut's a Dutch name, bad luck to ut! Can't I hov another wan?"

But the Irishman's protestations were lost amid the exclamations of his mates. A host of questions were asked. Satisfactory replies awaited every one.

"Get out the long-boat!" came the crisp order.

Presently the davits were swung out, and the creaking pulleys let the boat down into the water.

The first piece of work that was done aboard the *Creole* was the conveying of the three engineers below to the engine-room. Neither Watson, the second, or Jackson, the third, made the slightest resistance, but McPherson, though he was utterly incapable of recognising anyone, showed strenuous fight when someone tried to part him from his banjo.

"Losh, mon," he murmured, as he regained possession of it, "I wadna loose sicht o' it! I used tae play it when I was a wee bit chiel at

Dhoontrochty, and went tae the Free Kirk school." And then they carried him below, while he clawed at the strings helplessly and gurgled strains of "Annie Laurie."

Afterwards, the unconscious crew were carried out on deck and laid in a row. They were counted carefully, and lowered one by one into the long-boat. There were eleven of them, and these made the first load to leave the steamer Next they hauled up the skipper and the mate, who blinked like owls as they were brought to the daylight, but, realising nothing of what was happening, were dropped into the other boat that lay alongside, the cook and steward being placed beside them.

With some little difficulty they were got aboard the *Stella*. The deck-hands and stokers were deposited in the dark deck house. The skipper of the *Creole*, Howell caused to be placed in his own berth, and the mate was put in possession of the first officer's cabin.

Another boat was loaded up with the personal effects of the crew, as they were found in the forecastle, and the private possessions of Hudson and Talbot respectively, and these were all put as near as possible beside their owners, in some semblance of order, except that, of course, no discrimination was possible in the case of the forecastle hands. A few barrels of the *Creole's* stores were put on board, so that the transplanted crew might not starve.

Then the *Stella's* helm was lashed, and, under close-reefed top-sails, fore-sail, and fore-topmast stay-sail, the wind took her gently northward with her new crew aboard, slumbering where they had been placed.

"There'll be no more wind than this to-night," said Howell, as he stood on the *Creole's* bridge, watching the barque glide away, "so they'll come to no harm, and by the morning that four knots an hour will have carried her out of sight."

"And now, sir," said the mate, "what about these 'ere new names? Mebbe we'd better git 'em all off slick."

"Waal, I reckon we'd best begin with ourselves, Mr. Skinner," returned the skipper, lighting another cigar, "so I'll proceed to call you Mr. Talbot, see? And you'll remember that my name in future is Hudson—Captain Hudson, sir. Now, I've made out a list of the crew's names, so you'd better just go forward and instruct them. See that each man has his name and sticks to it."

"What about this missing second officer? I s'pose we can't dump Gosser overboard to make our crew coincide with the other? The log sez that the second mate was lost overboard."

"I reckon Gosser might feel that we was insisting on too close an imitation if we insisted on him gittin' drowned as well. I guess Gosser will have to go as bo'sun. Have you found out whether any of the hands have been in steam before?"

"A couple of 'em, sir. One was a trimmer aboard a White Star liner, and another sez he once served as stoker on one of the Lake steamers."

"That's prime. Now, just pick out three more likely men fer firing, and put the stoker on as donkey man. Give 'em all their names, and let them go below with the new donkey man. The fires had better be trimmed, so as to be ready for when those hogs of engineers heave round. Another thing ter remember is that the firemen had better jest grime up their faces with coal dust a bit, 'relse if those engineers twig 'em straight off, they'll get something on their minds."

And the *Creole's* new mate went forward with the list of names in his hand.

CHAPTER X.

THE MYSTIFICATION OF MCPHERSON.

"MON, I've got siccan a heidache! Happen ye'll ken what time it is?"

Mr. McPherson's voice had lost its festive sound. It was very husky by reason of his dried-up tongue and parched throat. There was no reply to his question.

He sat up from the recumbent position in which he found himself, and gazed dully round the engine-room. He was not surprised to find himself there. It seemed the most natural place for him to be in, but with strange intensity there fell upon him a sense of unfamiliarity in the intense silence that overhung everything. The murmur of the boilers was absent, the familiar intermittent hiss of the condenser-water escaping did not reach his ears, and, save for the clanking of an empty oil-drum, and the occasional clink of a stray bottle at the bottom of the crank-pit and on the iron grating, the brooding silence was unbroken.

He looked at the engine-room clock, but that offered no information, for it had stopped.

Grasping the hand-rail with a nervous clutch, he rose to his feet and glanced instinctively at the steam-gauge, and then at the telegraph-dial. The indicator pointed "full speed ahead." Apprehensively his eyes veered round upon the cold and moveless engines.

He shook his head in dull bewilderment.

"I dinna ken what's happened," he said, huskily, "and ma heid feels fu' large for ma hat."

He did not know, quite, whether it was night

or day. He looked up through the gratings and saw that the stars were shining in a clear sky, and, in a vague way, he was conscious that it was night.

He saw the lamps burning in the engine-room, and from all appearance they had been recently trimmed. He thought he heard a sound of movement on deck towards the port side, but he was not quite sure, and he stood, limp and bleareyed, clinging to the rail, as he tried to gather the scattered threads of his memory. Suddenly, his eyes descried the form of an arm and head protruding from the shadow by the door leading to the stoke-hole, and then, as he concentrated his gaze, he made out the rest of the body, and saw that it was the form of the third engineer, Jackson.

It occurred to him that his subordinate was neglecting his duty, and a little flush of indignation came upon the Scot.

"The gomerill!" he muttered. "I ken he's been at the whusky. I'll gie him siccan a shake o' the heid as will send it all intae his boots," but he forgot his intent the next moment, for, letting go the rail to cross over to his comrade, he slipped on the greasy floor into a pool of castor-oil, which had flowed from an overturned drum. A long groan escaped from the corner where the third lay doubled up. More than a little alarmed, McPherson crawled across to his subordinate, not daring to rise.

"What's wrang, Jackson?" he inquired in a frightened whisper. "Losh, mon, me bluid's running cauld! What's happened?"

He shook the third's shoulder violently. The other opened his eyes and huskily requested the chief to choke off and let him sleep.

"Nae, nae! Something awfu's happened," said McPherson, hoarsely. "She's run aahore, and I'm nae sae sure but the croud hasna taken tae the boats."

The third looked up, thoroughly awakened. His face was white and bloodless. There was a vague, indefinite fear in his eyes, and he staggered to his feet and looked around the engine-room with apprehension.

"Something's wrong," he said, "but I don't know what. I can't remember."

The third had been the scapegrace of a good family. He had come to sea because caste is not reckoned much of a quality in an engine-room. He put his hand to his forehead wearily, and glanced with aching eyes down the dark alleyway leading to the stoke-hole; the depressing silence struck his ears even as it had fallen upon the hearing of McPherson. He turned and put his nose within three inches of the steam gauge.

"Why," he said, with a sort of chuckle, "it's all right, Mr. McPherson. We're in the Bute Dock, and, if you recollect, the skipper wired that steam was to be got up by five o'clock."

In immediate contradiction of his conclusion, the steamer gave a violent lurch, which caused him to slip with sudden helplessness on to the oily floor.

McPherson gazed at him impressively. He was now propped up securely against the spanner rack, and he nodded his head with solemn dignity.

"I dinna want tae be creetical, Meester Jackson," he said, dwelling on each word, so that they individually might receive their full weight, "but it seems tae me that ye dinna hae enoo memory tae ken we've left Cardiff some days sin', and that either ye must hae been drinking, or ye must be going mad."

"I'm hanged if I know what's the matter with either you or me!" replied the third. "I feel confoundedly bad."

"Dinna include me, Meester Jackson," replied the chief with heavy dignity. "I've been a wee bittie indeesposed for the last day or twa, an' like the gomerills ye are, baith ye and Meester Watson hae been neglecting yere duty. I can see that ither drunken loon under the fitter's bench yonder."

"We're broken down, Mac," said Watson, "that's what it is."

"Ye've neglectit yere duty, mon," continued the chief, sorrowfully. "It's vera sad that as soon as I get my eye off ye——" A bottle rolling across the iron floor, as the ship gave a sudden lurch, stopped dead at McPherson's feet. He picked it up and observed mournfully that it was empty.

"And I hae sic an awfu' dryness in my throat," he murmured.

From under the bench there came a convulsive sob.

"Yea, ye loon, it's time ye repentit," said the chief, crawling with great deliberation over to the spot whence the sound originated. "If ye dinna overcome this vera sad liking o' yours for alcoholic steemulants, there'll be trouble in this engine-room. Dinna ye ken we've broke doon?"

Watson was pulled out into the light. He gazed at them in a dazed kind of way, and asked feebly what they were jolly well playing at.

"You've wiked me up art of the awfulest dream," he said. "I thought I was on a crawft where the navigitors had all got drunk, and had run us onter a rocky shore, where the ship's bottom was bein' 'ammered art."

"Ye're mad, mon, like Jackson here. I've done wrang in trusting ye. It's a meeracle the engines isna twisted intae scrap iron."

Watson rose to his feet. He glanced round at the cold, silent engines, the almost empty steam

gauge, the telegraph dial, then at the far from prepossessing faces of his companions.

"Tell yer what it is," he said, "we've been norty, and the engines is broken down in consequence. Where are we and where's the crard? I can't 'ear no one on deck."

"Losh! we're at Fayal, mon, and the crood's gone ashore," rapped out McPherson, with some attempt at briskness.

"Fayal be blowed!" returned the second disrespectfully. "Your brine must be jolly well turned. I remember Fayal right enough. We've left there dyes ago. I remember that, but awfter then me mind's a blank."

"So is mine," murmured the third, holding both his hands to his forehead in a hopeless gesture. "Great Scott! my head feels as if it were bursting."

All at once there came a sound of footsteps on the iron deck above.

"Below there, below there, Mr. McPherson!" sang out a voice. "How much longer are you going to be fixing up the old rattle-trap? Great thunder, sir, you've been four hours already, and it's about time we got way on her again!"

A thrill ran through the three men, but they were as if bereft of speech. Jackson was the first to speak. "It's the old man," he whispered, "and we *are* broken down." Then he raised his voice, and promptly replied to the query from above:—

"All right, sir; we're not quite ready below yet, but we shall have finished in a couple of hours."

"Right!" came the sharp reply. "Hustle things, boys! What's wrong with her now?"

"It's the auld break-doon, Captain Hudson," said McPherson, pulling himself together, "only a bit wairse than usual. The head-going eccentric-strap's seized, and she's bent a wee."

To their intense relief, the captain shouted down: "Two hours, then!" and walked away.

The nature of Mr. McPherson's reply had been pure guess-work, but, when they set to work to overhaul the engine, they found that it was precisely from this injury that the engine was suffering, and then it came into the third's mind that during his last watch, when he had been making an extra visit to the cross-bunkers, upon his return the brasses were hissing through his neglect to oil them, and he vaguely remembered that, as he was about to remedy this neglect, he lost consciousness. Of anything that had happened since, what time had elapsed, and how there came to be no steam, his memory had no cognisance.

"The link-motion is damaged as weel," said McPherson, concluding his examination. "Now just get tae wairk, while I gang doon and rouse up the stokers, whae've nae doot been also taking advantage o' my indeesposition tae neglect the steam."

He went into the stoke-hole, where, finding a fireman asleep, he quickly shook him to wakefulness.

"Why hae ye no steam, ye daft loon?" snapped the chief engineer.

"Fires been banked up, sir," replied the stoker, "awaiting while the repairs wuz finished. Shall I shake her up now?"

He had been accurately instructed. He spoke without hesitation.

McPherson looked at him a little doubtfully.

"What's yer name, mon?" he asked. "I dinna seem tae remember yer phiz."

"Fletcher, sir," answered the fireman promptly.

"Fletcher, eh? The name is fameeliar, but I dinna ken yer face. Ah, weel! ah, weel! I've been a wee bit indeesposed the last day or twa, and maybe ma pairceevin' faculty is obfuscated, as the meenister at Dhoondrochty used tae say, but yer face is vera strange tae me."

After giving orders for steam to be got up at once, he climbed the stoke-hole ladder somewhat disturbed in mind, which uneasiness was not lessened when he saw another fireman coming on duty whose figure and face seemed as strangely unfamiliar as the last.

"I hae an awfu' bad memory for faces, laddie,' he said, stopping the stoker, "'specially sin' the little indeesposition I had a day or twa ago. Happen if ye'll tell me yere name, I'll remember."

"Stokes, sir—Jim Stokes," answered the other, wiping the back of his hand over his mouth.

"Losh! Air ye Stokes? Ye've changed considerably, mon."

"No, sir! I reckon not. I was allus like this."

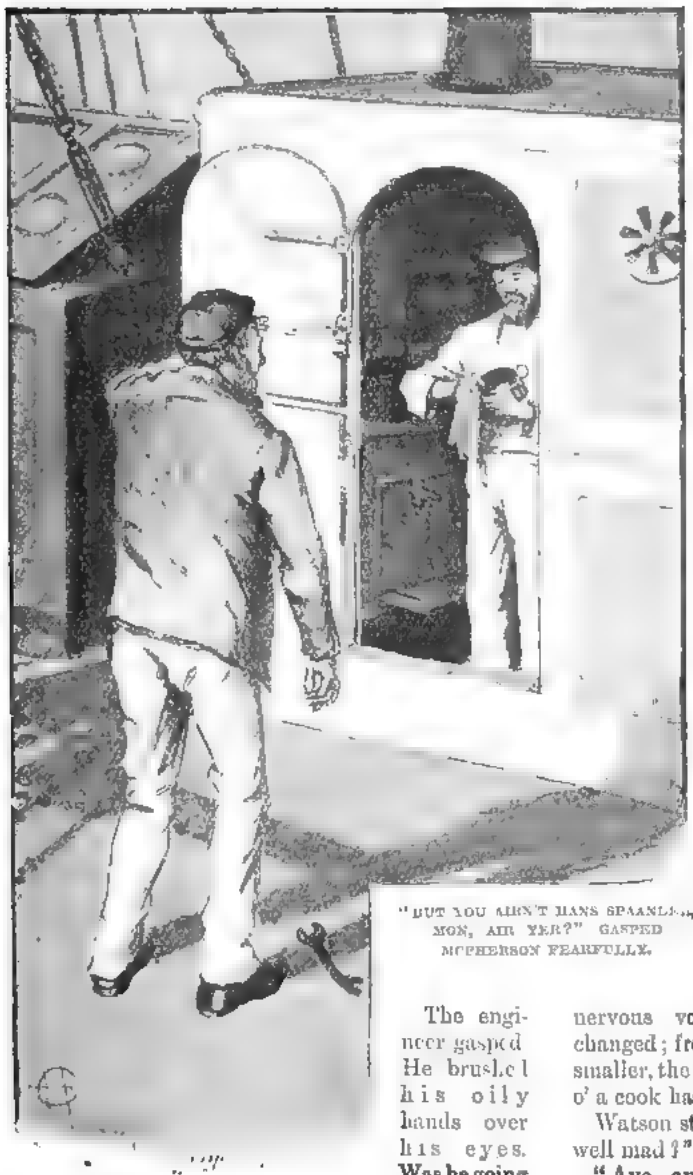
"Nae, nae, ye've changed," murmured the engineer, shaking his head strangely as he came down in front of Stokes and made for the engine-room, just as eight bells were struck (4 a.m.). "Unless I hae changed. I dinna ken, I dinna ken."

Owing to the muddled state of the three engineers, the repairs did not proceed very rapidly.

At five o'clock Mr. McPherson went upon deck and made his way to the galley in search of coffee. It was something of a shock to him to see a small thin man, with red hair, presiding over the pots and pans.

"Where's the cook, mon?" he asked, almost dreading the reply.

"Arrah, Misther McPherson, I'm that same gint, wid hot coffee all ready, which I was just going ter bring below to yez."



"BUT YOU AIRN'T HANS SPAANDER, MON, AIR YER?" GASPED MCPHERSON FEARFULLY.

The engineer gasped. He brushed his oily hands over his eyes. Was he going mad?

"But you airn't Hans Spaander, mon, air ye?" he gasped fearfully.

"Me very name, sorr, bad luck to it, fr it's a Dutch wan."

"But hae ye been aboard sin' we left Cardiff?"

"Arrah, sorr, thot's the very same truth!"

"Losh!" ejaculated the other.

He went below again, to where the second and third were working. He had reached the second grating when a voice cried out:—

"Mr. McPherson, how much longer? This delay's gittin' serious."

"Is that Captain Hudson?" asked the confused Scot.

"Well, consarn it all," came the reply, for Captain Jasper Howell found it difficult to drop his Yankeeisms, "who else do you think it is? This waiting is making me tired, Mr. McPherson."

The chief engineer came up the engine-room ladder.

"It's been a vera deeficult job, cap'n," he said; "but, losh mon! hae ye been drinking?" he rapped out in sudden fear. "Ye're aboot twa sizes smaller, and ye're face——"

"I'll thank you, Mr. McPherson, to git below and jest hustle them old rattletraps into working order, and not make personal remarks. You've been drinking, sir, yourself, and you know it, 'relse we'd have been under way hours ago."

McPherson turned round and went below without a word. An awful fear was upon him, a preying horror that was so terrible that he scarce dare let his thoughts dwell on it.

He took Watson by the shoulder. "Luik at me, laddie," he gasped in a horror-stricken whisper. "Dae ye see anything strange aboot me?"

"Yer fice ain't no beauty-show," said Watson, candidly.

"It isna my face that's troubling me," returned the chief with nervous voice; "it's the ithers. They're a' changed; fresh faces, new voices. The old man's got smaller, the stokers hae changed, and that gomerill o' a cook has bewitched hissel' intae an Irishmon."

Watson stared in astonishment. "Are you jolly well mad?" he said.

"Aye, aye, mon," returned McPherson in an awe-stricken whisper, "I believe I am clean daft. Gang on deck yoursel' and see. Everybody's changed. I dinna ken what's happened."

"Is that Misther Jackson coming up?" cried a voice.

"No, Watson," growled the second.

This was the information Captain Howell and the new crew of the *Creole* were short of. It had been easy to discriminate the chief engineer out of the three, but the identification of the other two, with their respective names, was not so easy. The cook made mental note of this engineer who volunteered that his name was Watson.

"There's some coffee ready for yez in the mess-room."

Watson, emerging from the engine-room door, looked blankly at the Irishman.

"You ain't Hans Spaander."

"Aroon! then, Misther Watson, bless yer eyes, for sure they can't see, ye're wrong entirely, for though ut's a Dutch name, ut was the wan tacked onter me in me youth."

Watson passed his hand over his forehead wearily. He looked forward, and saw men whom he did not know. He gazed up at the bridge, and saw two unfamiliar forms there. He had a question on his lips, but he hesitated, with a strange fear gripping him.

"Who's that on the bridge?" he asked at last, in a low, trembling voice.

"Is ut yere dishgraceful condition 'as made ye so's ye can't say? Sure ut's Captain Hudson and Misther Talbot, and foine and mad they're gettin' about this long shtop."

Watson turned on his heel and went straight down the engine-room ladder with horror in his eyes.

"It's right," he gasped, as he got below. "We're mad! The cussed whiskey has turned our brines."

He sank down on the plates, and buried his face in his hands.

"Jackson," said McPherson, with a sob in his voice, "gang on deck yersel', and see if you can pairceeve any change. It's awfu', mon; it's awfu'!"

What happened on deck, the first and second could only conjecture, for in a few minutes Jackson returned too hopelessly terrified to give any coherent account of what had taken place.

"It's true what you say," he gasped, while his pallid lips and chattering teeth made plain his terror. "The whole crew are bewitched, or else I am."

"That's it, mon, that's it," said McPherson, in a voice that grated harshly through his throat. "We're a' the same—mad, clean daft—and it's the whusky that's done it."

"That's so," said Watson, huskily; "we're balmy. And wot'll the old man sye when 'e finds art?"

"Dinna ye ken?—we'll hae tae conceal it," whispered McPherson, cunningly. "There must be method in our madness, mon."

CHAPTER XI.

WITH THE "CREOLE'S" CREW.

"OH, my! Wine is a mocker, and strong drink is rampageous, and not so much as a drop of cold water to wet me tongue."

Pipp crawled to his feet and looked around.

"'Ow my 'ead does ike," he said, "and me stomach feels like a bottomless pit, and gnaws like ravening wolves. I dunno quite 'where I am. This hain't my berth. In my hawful condition I must 'ave come in 'ere by herror. I do 'ope I hain't 'urt anybody in my frenzy."

He turned out of the berth, and walked softly into the saloon with puzzled eyes. The place seemed to have shrunk; it wore a bare and poverty-stricken appearance. A cheaply varnished deal table ran the length of the cuddy from the mizzen-mast, instead of the mahogany that he had been accustomed to, and on either side this table was a stout, hair-covered bench, where had formerly been velvet and upholstery, with a swing back.

He looked with dazed amazement at the incomprehensible change in the garniture of his surroundings. The cabins all seemed in the wrong place, and the companion-stairs ascended to starboard instead of turning aft. He stepped up the companion hopelessly mystified, and, when he reached the deck, a greater surprise greeted him. There was no funnel to the ship, no engine-room, and above him bellied great stretches of canvas and a maze of ropes. The significance of this change took some moments to soak in, for Pipp was no seaman, but when he realised in part that either some drastic change had come upon the *Creole*, or he was on a different ship, a chill of fear came over him. So great was his fear and horror of the virulent liquor he had been forced to drink, that he readily persuaded himself that it was capable of effecting the most extraordinary circumstances and changes, and it occurred to him vaguely that he was suffering from some hallucination.

He went forward. The galley door was open, but though there was a sense of strangeness about it, the pair of legs that sprawled through the doorway was familiar enough. He saw, beyond, the features of Hans Spaander. With no gentleness he kicked that preparer of food, and then waited to see what manner of awakening the Dutchman would make.

Yawning prodigiously, the cook staggered to his feet. He looked inside the galley, and then paused. He glanced outside and down the main deck, and then up at the masts.

"My good gracious, vot a fright!" he murmured, "I tream I vos on a steamship, when all der time I was on this old wind-jammer. My! but it vos a very real tream. She was called der *Creole*, bound for New Orleans, and— —"

"It hain't no dream at all," the steward gasped. "I was on that ship, and I wikes up to find this hawful chinge."

"You vos tream the same tream?" murmured the cook, stupidly. "Dere was no such ship as der *Creole*."

"Then what bloomin' little ship upon the sea is this?" asked the steward, blankly.

"You vos lose you memory, eh?" said the cook, gravely. "Dis ship vos der *Upsala*, bound from Hernosand to Grimsby mit timber."

The steward clapped his hands to his forehead in an attitude of dumb despair. "I can't understand," he moaned, "I can't understand. I believe I am going balmy."

"Dots about der size of it," returned the cook. "Now I comes to tink of it, I tream about a schap like you on der steamer, who wouldn't take a drop of nodings until we forced it down his throat. Jah, he vos mad, I tinks."

"It is no dream," cried Pipp. "It is true."

"Hein! it vos foolish. Don't I tell you it vos all a tream? Here vos der ship. Dis vos solid, eh?" He stamped his foot on the deck and pointed to the interior of the galley.

There was a step on the deck, and the mate, looking very dazed, his mouth wide open and his eyes large with wonder, stepped on deck.

"Oh, Mr. Talbot, sye it's not true," cried the steward; "sye I didn't ship on this 'ere hawful fishin' smack."

The mate, as if he had not heard, took a slow survey of his environment, like a man who walks in his sleep.

"What has happened?" he murmured, in blank amazement. "Where's the *Creole?*"

"Then the *Creole* was not a dream, sir?" burst out the steward. "Thank goodness! But wot har we doin' 'ere, sir?"

Talbot seemed stricken with dumb amazement. He gazed along the deck from forecastle to poop; his eyes wandered from the deck to the mast heads, and then round the horizon.

"How have we got here?" he ejaculated. "Great thunder! what is the meaning of it?"

There was no answer forthcoming. He moved forward as he observed a group of men standing under the break of the forecastle. There was a nervous movement among them as they saw their superior officer, then there broke from them a seaman named Wilks, who had been about as bad as anyone in the orgies on board the *Creole*.

"Wot is it, sir, wot is it?" he cried, huskily. "We've been a bad lot, sir, that we 'ave, and we've been playing Old Harry with the ship's cargo, but, unless we are all raving lunatics, we went to sleep aboard a steamer and woke up on a wind-jammer."

"My lad," said Talbot, "I'm as mystified as you are."

"My opinion is we're bewitched, sir," said the bo'sun, with a frightened look in his eyes.

"*Madre de Dios!*" muttered Gonzalez, with tremulous lips, "it ees dark work. We are cursed." He shivered, and edged closer to his companions.

Superstitious awe was in each face. There was a tendency among them to keep together like frightened children.

There was one old seaman, named Bunsen, who sat contentedly on the forecastle pulling at a pipe. He took no notice of the others, and only moved to sweep the horizon with his eyes sometimes.

"Bunsen's mad, sir," whispered the boatswain. "He thinks he's been spirited back inter ancient times, and this is the ship he sailed on when 'e was a boy. He's callin' us all by different names, an' 'e thinks we're homeward bound from Melbourne."

"And my opinion is, 'e ain't the only one mad aboard," exclaimed a fireman, "only we're mad different ways. It's that horrible whiskey. Oh, lor! look at this awful old craft how she flops."

"My lads," said the mate, "there's some terrible mystery here that I can't fathom yet. Are you all here? Is anyone missing?"

"The engineers ain't been seen yet, sir," broke in a fireman.

"They may be aft. Anyhow, our first duty is to give this craft a thorough overhauling. I don't like the heavy way she takes the seas forward. Just sound the well, bo'sun."

The iron rod was dropped down as the vessel, in the midst of a roll, rested a moment on even keel, and then it was hauled up again.

"There's five-and-twenty inches, no less, sir," sung out the bo'sun.

"Then it means pumping, lads," said the mate. And presently there came the regular clanking indicating that the water was being sucked out of the ship. The wheel was unlashed and a man put in control, but the yards and sails were not touched, though the vessel in the light breeze had little more than steering way.

The mate went below, with Pipp whimpering on his heels. His face was set sternly. Though he was hopelessly incapable of even guessing the nature of the mysterious calamity that had befallen them, he was conscious that his own neglect of duty had contributed to its happening, for, whatever this mystery was—supernatural or otherwise—it was his reproach that it had occurred during his lapse from that duty which was expected of him.

There was a bottle of spirit lying in the fiddles on the cabin table. He picked it up and thrust it into the steward's hands.

"Take this on deck and throw it overboard," he said.

The berth in which he had found himself was

"YOU HAVE LOST THE 'CREOLE' FOR ME! YOU HAVE LOST ME TWO THOUSAND POUNDS!"

one of two abaft the mizzen mast. He had not entered the other before, for in his stupefied amazement, when he had failed to recognise his strange surroundings, he had instinctively made for the deck.

He flung open the door and beheld Captain Hudson sitting up in the bunk gazing stupidly around him.

"Mr. Talbot," he said, speaking very thickly, "wot's the matter? Has she stopped? I don't hear the engines; and, by the way, wot's the matter with this cabin? The door useter be there, and the wash-basin——"

"Everything's the matter, sir," cried the mate, sinking on to a locker. "We're not on the *Creole* at all, but on a leaky old wind-jammer."

"Not on the *Creole*, Mr. Talbot?" echoed Hudson. "Is this a confounded joke, sir?"

"I wish I could say so, sir; but what I speak is true. We're not on the *Creole*. We're on a barque that's had her name scraped out, and how we've got here goodness only knows."

Hudson glared out of his bloodshot eyes wildly, as if he but half comprehended. He gave a snarl like an angry cur and slipped from his bunk.

"On another ship?" he muttered, staggering out into the cuddy. He gazed round the cabin dumbly while his lips writhed and his eyes rolled redly, and then with frantic haste he ran madly up the companion-ladder and burst out on deck.

"My ship! What have you done with my ship?" he cried in fierce frenzy, letting his eyes wander all over the barque. He saw the group of men at the pumps. He turned to them with sullen ferocity.

"What has become of her? It is a plot to ruin me with the owners. What have you done with the *Creole*?"

He turned and faced the mate, and lifted his hand menacingly as if he would strike him.

"What have you done with the *Creole*?" he shrieked again. "Gone, gone!—and I am a

ruined man. You have lost the *Creole* for me! You have lost me two thousand pounds! Take this, you lubberly scoundrel!" and, drawing out a revolver, he fired point-blank at the mate.

But a quick arm had shot out from the crowd of seamen, and knocked up Hudson's hand as he pulled the trigger, and the bullet was embedded in the main-mast. The next instant the revolver was cracking wildly, as Talbot, closing with the other, tried to disarm him. They fell to the deck, rolling over and over in their mad struggle. Talbot got the pistol by its muzzle, and while he gripped it, keeping it directed away from himself, it spat viciously again as Hudson made an attempt to shoot his opponent. But with the report there came instantly a cry from the skipper, and he ceased to struggle.

(To be continued.)

THE WEARY XMAS EDITOR— Can Only Hint at Certain Words Which Make Him Tired.

CONTRIBUTORS are all alike,
They make one melancholy;
Ah! how I wish they'd give a rest
To m++tl+t++ and h++l+!
And I should be so very glad
If they would kindly pause,
Ere they decide to write about
The g+f+s of S++t+ C+++s.

A famous Saxon drink they much
Prefer to honest Bass ale,
And hence I find that, as a rule,
They're bent on h+ld++g w+ss++l.
They're sweet upon each "chestnut" theme—
They're fond of i+e and sk+t+s,
And changes they delight to ring
On w+t+r j+gs and w++ts.

They don't appear to think that they
Are seasonably scoring,
Unless they kindle on some hearth,
A b+az+ that's good at r+ar++g.
And just to deepen, if they can,
The horrid gloom that fills
One's breast, they outrage novelty
By rhyming "p+ll+" with "b++ls"!

FELIX LEIGH.

A TALE OF FEARFUL ODDS.

Being a Page from the Indian Mutiny.

By Dick Donovan. Illustrated by George Soper.

THE globe-trotter of to-day who gazes in admiration on the magnificent monument—the marble angel, with outstretched wings, and pitying and sorrowing face, who keeps silent watch and ward over the charnel-well where so many of our countrywomen and children were hurled, mangled and gashed, after the awful massacre of Cawnpore—can hardly realise the fiendish cruelty of the mutineers, or the splendid valour displayed by Great Britain's sons. But there were deeds done in those stirring days, the mere recital of which are as epic poems that shall ring down the grooves of time until the world be no more. Commonplace enough Cawnpore was before the Mutiny, and commonplace it is now, with its reek of leather, and its huge shoe, and saddle and harness factories, but its name will live in history; and generations yet unborn will thrill with pride as they read how a few men, in whose veins flowed British blood, kept a host at bay, while the sky was lurid with flames and the earth ran red with blood. And linked indissolubly with Cawnpore for ever and ever are the names of Azimoolah, Tantia Topee, and last, not least, the human wolf, Nana Sahib, who satiated himself with gore, then disappeared into space, and whose end no living man knoweth.

It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that, during the Mutiny, fire and brimstone rained upon Cawnpore; and one comes to realise the poverty of language when any attempt is made to describe how the gallant few defied the swarming host of rebels. In a cramped space, behind friable earthworks, surrounding a miserable, tumble-down barrack, crouched and starved, and gradually died, five hundred women and children; and, for their sakes, and the honour and glory of the splendid Empire they represented, about the same number of men held the foe, and vowed to God that they would fall to the last man, but surrender—never! Think of it, you gentlemen who sit at home at ease; around those friable sandhills howled fifty thousand of the enemy, drilled and trained by ourselves; armed with modern weapons, and plentifully supplied with big guns; and from the muzzles of these guns a stream of shot and shell was poured, night and day, on the devoted garrison, and those fifty thousand were aided and abetted by 250,000 of the populace. During the day the sun shone with blistering fierceness, and the nights were nights of furnace heat. The wells dried up; children wailed for bread, women drooped, wilted, and died, and their bodies could not even be buried; and for those who were mangled with the shot and bursting shell little could be done, for of surgical appliances there were practically none. When there were no longer bags for the powder, women tore up their stockings and clothes, and went all but naked to supply the want. The men, scorched with the sun, and grimed with dust and smoke, starved and ragged, hungry and parched, sleepless and weary, stuck to their posts until they were shot down, or dropped dead from exhaustion. Then the corpses were dragged away, and gaunt, famished survivors took their places. At that time, even if a child had whispered the word "Surrender," he would have paid the penalty with death. Again and again did the infamous Nana Sahib command his legions to rush those sandhills; and again and again were they hurled back, shattered and stunned by the gallant few who recognised no such word as defeat in their vocabulary. And when the "Tiger of Cawnpore" realised at last that not even his hundreds of thousands could crush the brave hearts behind the sandbanks, he resorted to stratagem. There were women and children still living—white women and white children—and, for their sakes, the Nana would grant terms. The garrison should march out with the honours of war, and, with their women-folk, should have safe escort to Allahabad.

General Wheeler was in command of the little band of heroes. He was stricken in years. He had daughters of his own with him, and his heart was broken by the unutterable suffering and misery and anguish he had witnessed. And so he decided to accept the terms, and capitulate. And forth from the reeking shambles marched the ragged rabble, the pride of race still burning within them—ragged, weak, gaunt, hungry; with

festering wounds and mangled limbs, but every man still an unconquered soldier, and every woman still ready to endure, and suffer, and die, rather than to confess defeat. With their arms in their hands, their torn flags flying, their drums beating, these defiers of a host made their painful way to the river ghat, where lay the budgerows in which they were to embark for the voyage on the Ganges to Allahabad. Many had reached the apathy of despair, so that they hardly cared now what fate befell them; but some few suspected treachery, and kept on the alert.

What followed reads almost like the description of a hideous nightmare dream. As the white-haired general descended from his palanquin at the ghat, his head was severed from his body by the sweep of a tulwar. That was the signal for a crime that has but few parallels in history. The boats, which it was hoped would be arks of safety, proved to be traps of destruction. From both sides of the river, big guns and muskets poured forth a deadly fire, under the direction of Tantia Topee and Azimoolah.

In the thatched roofs of the budgerows, combustibles had been concealed, and when these broke out into flame the scene became hellish in the horrors that ensued. The invalids and the wounded were roasted alive. Men went mad and plunged into the blood-encrimsoned river, only to have their brains scattered by musket balls, fired by concealed marksmen

THE NEXT MOMENT HE PITCHED INTO THE GANGES.

And so the slaughter went on until the very angels of heaven must have wept with pity. But, while shattered men and helpless women and children could be destroyed, there were still men, gaunt with hunger, but with lion hearts, who turned a defiant face to the foe.

For hours the awful work proceeded. From every conceivable point on both sides of the river, grape and musket balls were rained upon the doomed people. It was the dry season. The water was shallow, and long stretches of sand and mudbanks were exposed. On these the shattered corpses of men, women, and children drifted. But the butchers were unmoved by the sight, and the slaughter was continued. Thirty-nine boats had been destroyed, but there was a fortieth, that got into mid-stream and began to drift. The boat was without oars, rudder, or sail. Her freight consisted of about eighty British men, many of them wounded and mutilated, and all more or less ill. But they had muskets, ammunition, and hearts of heroes. A boat laden with Sepoys went after them. A Sepoy officer rose up and commanded the British to surrender. The next moment he pitched into the Ganges with a bullet through his brains. The native boat grounded on a sandbank. It was the white men's chance. They swarmed into the water. Their swords in their mouths, they waded to the stranded boat, and, falling upon its occupants, cut them to pieces. They smote

with the might of giants. In the enemy's boat were stores of ammunition. These the attackers conveyed back to their own craft as best they could, and drifted down the stream. Night fell, and for the time they were safe. Weary and worn as they were, they slept, and when the morning dawned, they found they had got out of the main stream, and were aground in a creek. Here the watchful and relentless enemy discovered them, and poured upon them a hail of bullets. The officer in command of the white men was Captain Vibart. He lay on his back with both arms shattered, but he delivered his orders with coolness and courage:—

"All who can go, jump on shore and attack the enemy. Remember our murdered ones."

Fourteen men sprang with alacrity to obey the order. Fourteen only were physically capable of doing so. They had only a few yards to wade, and as soon as they scrambled up the bank they hurled themselves on the astonished foe and smote him hip and thigh before he could recover from his astonishment. When they turned to go back to their boat they found that, lightened of their weight, she had floated, and was drifting out into the main stream, while those on board were absolutely helpless, for they had no oars, and they floated to destruction.

When the devoted fourteen thus found their means of retreat cut off, they formed up and ran to a Hindoo temple a short distance away. They were followed by a savage horde of natives, thirsting for their blood. Then ensued a struggle that reads like a page from Homer. The white men stood at the door of the temple, and fought with desperate and magnificent courage. The natives fell in swathes. The British piled up the black corpses, and made a rampart, and over this bulwark of human flesh they kept the on-rushing hordes at a distance. One of the brave defenders found an earthenware jar of water in the temple. He ladled it out to his famishing comrades. It was putrid and full of insects, but it was like nectar to them; it gave them new strength, and they scattered death and destruction among their enemies.

Some weak-hearted native rode with all speed to Nana Sahib, saying that a little band of white men had got into a temple, and could not be dislodged. The human wolf broke into a fury of passion when he heard that there was still an unconquered remnant. There must not be a single survivor to tell the tale of his treachery. Those white men, he declared, should be slain, though it took a thousand Sepoys to do it. The temple must be razed to the ground, and in less than an hour word be brought to him that the last of the hated Feringhees had been destroyed.

The Nana's orders were conveyed to the soldiers, and attack after attack was made on the invincible defenders, but without result—the rampart of dead bodies could not be rushed. Then the assailants collected great quantities of faggots and dried cow-dung, and piling these combustibles behind the building, they fired them, and as the flames rose high the cowardly natives threw bags of gunpowder into the fire, and the temple began to crumble. The little band was under the direction of Lieutenant Delafosse, of the 53rd Regiment of Native Infantry. The number of the brave remnant had been reduced to twelve, as two had unfortunately been shot. It was now only too obvious to the defenders of the temple that they must be defeated; the burning building was becoming untenable, and the ranks of the enemy were increasing almost every minute. Under such circumstances men might well have been pardoned, if, recognising the hopelessness of their position, they had capitulated and sued for mercy; for, in that supreme hour when death surrounded them, and a loophole of escape was nowhere to be seen, thoughts could hardly fail to wander to dear ones at home. Moreover, they had gone through those lurid weeks in Cawnpore, and witnessed horrors such as few mortal eyes have gazed upon. Suffering, anguish, disease, death—death in its most horrible form. These scenes of blood and unutterable human misery were well calculated to unnerve and unman the strongest; but never one of the unconquerable twelve ever hinted at surrender. Their ammunition was almost exhausted; but each man had a musket, and each musket was furnished with a bayonet, and woe betide the enemy who came within striking distance. When the natives saw that the temple was crumbling and the flames spreading, they raised their voices in a roar of triumph, and one excited giant of a fellow, who had been a sergeant in a native regiment, rushed forward, brandishing a sword, and calling hoarsely to his fellows to follow him. Inspirited by his act, several responded to his call, and he was heard to exclaim:—

"We have them now. Not one of the white devils shall escape. Death to the Feringhees! Maro! Maro!"

They were the last words he ever uttered. The next instant he leapt high into the air, and fell prone upon the earth with a crash. A well-directed bullet had gone through his heart. Then the little garrison roared back a shout of defiance, and the brave followers of the sergeant turned tail and got under cover as fast as they could. In a few minutes, however, they, and many others who saw the sergeant fall, plucked up a little courage and made another rush, but were met

with such a well-aimed volley from the twelve, that eight of their number were hit, three mortally. One fellow was struck in the jaw, the lower part of his face being carried away. The rush was stopped, and once again the cowards retreated; but others had crept round to the back of the smoke another attempt was made to reach them. But tongues of flame leapt through the smoke, and bullets sped with fatal effect into the ranks of the enemy.

This last volley was a mere chance one. When the smoke rolled down, Delafosse recognised that

THEIR AMMUNITION WAS ALMOST EXHAUSTED.

building and cast more fuel on the fire, and a small keg of gunpowder was carried forward and thrown in. The shock of the explosion killed several natives, and it caused the temple to tremble to its foundations, while a dense cloud of black smoke obscured the whole place, and well-nigh suffocated the defenders. Under cover of this it was the psychological moment for a sortie, and in low tones he told his comrades to fire together, then re-load, and make a dash for the river, he leading the way. They divested themselves of nearly all their clothing, for the flames were swirling round the doorway, and already licking the human rampart.

"Are you ready?" asked their leader.

"Yes, yes, yes," came the answer.

"Off, then," and Delafosse leapt over the dead bodies, and the others followed him. Some were scorched with fire, and all were grimed black with smoke and powder. As soon as the natives realised that these wonderful Feringhees, who would not be conquered, were escaping, there arose a mighty shout, and a rush, and the little band found themselves hemmed in. A volley was fired, then the deadly bayonet commenced to clear a pathway, but in that final encounter five of the splendid heroes were bowled over, and the number was reduced to seven.

Hacking their way through the yelling mob, the seven dashed for the river, the lieutenant still leading. At their heels, like a pack of mad, starved wolves, the rebels followed, hacking and slashing with sword and tulwar; but in the mad scurry and excitement they slashed and shot each other, and some fell and were trampled on, and others gave up the chase from sheer exhaustion. It testifies to the wonderful powers of endurance possessed by those white men, that, notwithstanding all they had gone through, lack of sleep, food, water, and ordinary comforts, they were enabled to out-distance their demoniacal pursuers, who filled the air with execrations and cries of "Deen, deen" (death). Their ferocious hatred prevented their recognising the magnificent heroism of these seven men, who would die, but never give in.

When Delafosse reached the water his comrades were close beside him. With weary eyes they gazed on the broad stream of the noble Ganges. There, alone, was their last hope. They cast their muskets far out into the river, for they had no further use for them, then plunged in and struck away from the shore. For a moment the pursuers were baulked of their prey, and the pursuit was checked. It had not been anticipated that the white men would take to the water. What did they expect to do by such a move? They must surely drown. But no, they were swimming lustily. A havildar major yelled out to his men to shoot.

SEVERAL SEPOYS KNELT DOWN, TOOK DELIBERATE AIM, AND FIRED.

"By Allah, they will escape us! Shoot, shoot! Will these cursed English never die?"

Several Sepoys knelt down, took deliberate aim, and fired. Two of the bullets found their billets, and two poor fellows threw up their arms, and sank to the bottom.

Five only remained, and the rapid stream bore them farther and farther away. The pursuers were furious, for there wasn't a boat to be had. They ran their swiftest along the banks; and they emptied their rifles again and again at the heads of the swimmers. But Shiva, the destroyer, had turned his face away, for the bullets fell harmless. For three miles the pursuit was kept up. Then one of the five, an artilleryman, became exhausted and turned on his back to rest. Unconscious of where he was going to, he drifted to the bank, and a black craven, jumping down to the water's edge, raised the butt end of his musket, and brought it crashing down on the spent swimmer's head.

Four now remained. Four out of the splendid

band who had marched away from the wretched earthworks, ragged and famine stricken, but hopeful. Four only had come through that hell of fire, and fiendish slaughter, and the river; the Holy Ganges, more merciful than the land, gave them life and freedom. The rapid current made swimming an easier task than it otherwise would have been; but for another three miles the mighty four, who for a day and a night had gone through an ordeal that very few men have ever been called upon to endure, were harassed by the cowardly rabble, who taunted, jeered, and expended powder and shot to no purpose. Fate had decreed that those four should live. At last the shouts died away, the firing ceased, the pursuers gave up the chase, and in a little while some natives, who were fishing on the Oude side, hailed the swimmers, when they had recovered from the surprise that the apparition caused them, and asked them to come ashore. Exhausted as they were, the four comrades decided to trust these fishermen, though they parleyed with them first, and received an assurance that they were subjects of a Rajah who was friendly to the British, and they vowed by their gods they would give those broken men safe escort to their ruler's presence. So Delafosse and his three companions left the friendly river. They had to be dragged up by their new-found friends, for they were weak and exhausted, and when they had recruited their strength a little they proceeded, with their guides, to the palace of the Rajah, who received them kindly and furnished them with food and clothes, and protected them. The four survivors were Delafosse, Gordon Thomson, Private Murphy, and Gunner Sullivan..

Upwards of forty years have passed since those fearful Cawnpore days, and probably there is not now a single survivor of the heroes who caused Nana Sahib to exclaim :—

"These British people can be killed; they will die, but they cannot be conquered."

Such men need no monument. Their names are indelibly written in history, and until time shall be no more they will be remembered. But Macaulay's lines may well serve as their epitaph :—

To every man upon this earth
Death cometh soon or late,
And how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers
And the temples of his gods?

These representatives of the Imperial race had worthily upheld the traditions of the British Army, and for the honour and glory of their flag they poured out their blood like water. Although Delafosse performed prodigies of valour, he was but a type of man to be found everywhere among the "scattered handfuls" who kept the wolves at bay, and yet his courage was of no ordinary kind, as was evidenced by an incident that occurred during the bombardment of the earthworks at Cawnpore by the Nana's troops. One day an ammunition wagon was set on fire by a shell from the besiegers' lines. As soon as the flames shot up, that spot became a target for all the insurgents' guns, and a perfect hurricane of iron beat upon it. Almost all the artillerymen in that part of the defences had been killed or wounded, and the rest of the soldiers were so exhausted that it seemed as if nothing could be done. In a few minutes the fire must have spread to the other wagons, and caused a disastrous explosion. Delafosse took in the situation. He rushed forward, threw himself under the blazing wagon, pulled away as much of the burning wood as he could with his bare hands, and threw earth on the rest. Two soldiers, bearing buckets of water, now ran to his aid, and the young lieutenant dashed the water about, and sent the men for more, while he continued to scatter earth on the smouldering timber, and all the time the iron hail fell around him. But he succeeded in his self-imposed task. The fire was extinguished, the wagons were saved, and the youthful officer and the two soldiers escaped unscathed. All this splendid valour, however, was fruitless, and could not avert the awful doom of the women and children, who, a little later, were butchered with barbaric cruelty.

Cawnpore to-day is a busy, toiling city; but the stain of the infamy of '57 can never be washed away. And the marble monument over the awful well, with its touching inscription :—

"Sacred to the Perpetual Memory of a great company of Christian People, chiefly Women and Children. XVI. Day of July, MDCCCLVII."—

recalls one of the most hideous pages of man's cruelty to man in the world's story.

A QUICK CURE FOR CANNIBALS.

"Gentlemen," said Professor Makeyouopenyoureyeski (known to the London police as "John Smith"), "if you will delay your meal for one moment I will prove to you—

"That you will do infinite damage to your digestions by endeavouring to make a meal off me—

"Inasmuch as I am composed, not, as you seem to imagine, of flesh and blood, but of a variety of other articles—

"And so, if you are quite satisfied that I am uneatable, I will, with your permission, bring my entertainment to a close!"

THE RECREATION OF ESCATING.

R. THE EDITOR,—My friend go to make a visit to Mr. his Uncle Sir Smith of Broxley Hall, Yorkshire. Mr. his Uncle hope that I also will render visite at him. I make my paquet, my mail in leather, my night sack, my hatbandbox. I send to arrest a cab. "Vite! cocher, the Dock of the Grand North." Very scarcely I make him comprend. But at length the Dock. I give my bagages to a factor. I take my billet, thicket is it not? I stand on the quai—the train, they say, goes to part. I enter—I am alone—good! I arrange myself—it is the train rapide—that goes well. A bell sounds—a siffle—a train part all gently at the other side of the quai—I regard it with tranquillity. A factor is crying—it is the mine—he jump to my eye, he agitate his arms of a manner extraordinaire, he precipitate himself upon me.

"Your train, Sir! it comes to depart!" I descend in all haste. It is too late—it has already sorted. "What to do? There is another train?" "Yes, Sir, in an hour." "A rapide?" "No." "What then!" "An omnibus train!" "Thousand thunders! but, que voulez vous?" I can nothing of it. It must to attend.

At last the omnibus train. All the world throw itself on it; me also. I have not the means to voyage at the first class; there is not of the second; it must then to rest at the third. I enter a compartiment of smokers. Very scarcely I can see—three soldiers, some worksmen, some commis voyageurs. Messieurs the soldiers have a bottle; they partage with the worksmen. They sing at loud voice. Ah, Bah! I cannot; it is not possible I descend—another compartiment. Ah, better! No soldiers; again some worksmen, a woman grosse, enormous, of figure enflàmed—a mountain you say? my friend, I tell you she is a volcano. At feet a box, on high a sack, a valise, a paquet, some panniers; more women, some children. But what do I hear? a cri infantile? Ma foi, an infant! its cries piercing fall on my ears. For me, I love not some infants. I will search another compartiment. I descend. But the conductor siffles, he agitates a flag, he push me into the compartiment with grand force. I enter precipitately with the grosse woman, the infant crier, the children, the bagages. Very scarcely I find a room. The train departs. The infant cries always. Ah Bah! it must to be philosopher.

I am at middle, near me the monster female. Outside the snow, the wind. My companions converse of a patois incomprehensible. Very scarcely I comprend a few of words; it appears that it makes the weather convenable, seasonable one says. My faith! it is the sacred weather of England. Always the children eat buns and bonbons; their fingers are gluants, their mouths also: they are inquiet, without repose. By bye the infant has the nourishment, its cries cease:

THE BRAVE HORSE TROTS.

the woman monstrous nods, she incline herself to me, her head rests itself on my shoulder: Ciel! what horror! An odour of peppermint discover itself; it is disgustant. I am oppress of a weight immense, very scarcely I support myself. I am Atlas sustaining the world. In attendance the atmosphere is thick, horrible, stuffing.

A station—the train arrest itself, the door is open, the snow enters, also three women of more. "Pardon, mesdames, there is no more of place." They insist; I rise with precipitation; the woman monstrous fall on the banc, she roll on the floor, in throwing some piercing cries. I assist her. She is enraged. "Do I," she say, "call myself gentleman?" I make my apologies; I essaye to lift her. Ciel! what a monster! she is a female hippopotamus. But the good fortune come to my assistance—a factor repeat the name of the station. Ah! with precipitation she seize her sack, her valise, her pannier, her paquet, then her great box; it is her destination. She descend; she make a faux pas; her bagages fall from her arms, the mountain engenders an avalanche. But courage! she is gone, an odour of peppermint alone remains. We advance—the hours pass—little at little my companions of voyage depart. At last I rest alone. Outside always the snow—the country is white; the trees, the houses are as fantoms. The sun couches himself—it makes itself night. I sleep. . . .

IT IS THIS TIME THAT I FALL ON MY FACE.

What is it that it is? The train is immobile—it is still dark—my ears are full of some voices—there is a noise of feet—the people outside haste. I open the window. "Factor! how does this station call itself? What then? York! Is it possible!" I am then arrived, but what to do? "Bagages? No, I have not of them—they are gone, lost. Hotel? No, I expect a friend, a gentleman, but at this hour—— Ah, ah! At the good hour! My friend, I am happy! I am enchanted! It is then you! Permit that I embrace you!" He has a vehicle, my friend—a dogtrap; my bagages, it appears, are already arrived. We ascend the dogtrap, the valet sits himself at behind; my friend knows to conduct, the brave horse trots; it makes cold, but we have quantity of couvertures—raps is it not? no, wrugs. The wheels roll silencely on the snow. Enfin we enter a park, we traverse an avenue all white with spectre trees; at the end is a large chateau—it is the Broxley Hall.

The door open itself—my friend descend. "Well come, mon ami; we are here." We enter. Ah! the warmth, the light! In the hall Sir Smith, he attends us, he conduct us to the salon. He present me to madame, her estimed wife, Milady Smith; at behind her another lady, all young, belle. She turn her figure. Ah ciel! what happiness! It is Miss Mary, the sister of my friend! I place my hand on my heart, I incline myself with impressment—my friend have not told me that her sister is here. Enfin we soup. It is late. I am fatigued. We go to couch ourselves. I sleep. I dream of a demon, monstre, grosse, which abimes me in respiring some vapours of peppermint. I cry at succours, and voici an angel, of hair all gold, of eyes all blue, of tint of peach, respond to my cry, and exorcise the demon. . . .

It is the morning; I raise myself. It frosts very strong; it makes cold. I make my toilette; I descend. We take the breakfast. My friend demand do I know to escate. I replique, "Pardon, but I know not the phrase 'to escate.'" Mademoiselle interpret, "To escate—patiner." I am desolated; I do not know to patiner; it must some pattens, is it not? I have them not. "Never mind," say

Miss Mary, "we will teach you." I am enchanted, I shall without dout be at the feet of mademoiselle. "Not at all unlikely," his brother respond in laughing. "Eh bien! I am content. Mademoiselle retire to put her habits. My friend excuse himself to me; he will return in a little of time; he has some affairs to reglate. In attending John will charge himself of me, he will procure me all that I desire. In a half-hour we shall sort for the tank.

The brave John arrive. "What is it that I desire?" "Eh bien, mon ami, we go to the tank, I desire some pattens." "Pattens? a pair of pattens?" This good John is surprised; he smile with the politeness, he does not perhaps think that I know to patten. My faith! he has reason, but I do not tell him so. "Yes, yes, a pair of pattens!" John gratte his head. "Cook," he say in grimacing, "have a pair of pattens." "But, Mon Dieu! I do not desire the pattens of the cook! His master, has he not some of them?" John does not know, he thinks that no, his master never use pattens. "But what then? What to do?" John says cook will lend me her pattens if I wish it. It is absurd, but faute de mieux, I will essaye them. Will he make my compliments to the cook, and desire the lend of her pattens? John depart; all soon he return, in his hand the pattens. Milles tonnerres! they are not at all some pattens; they are some sabots, at bottom are some rings of iron! they are alarming. But it is a mistake, is it not? "Regard then, my good John, I go to—to—to slip on the ice, savez vous?" John stare; he say, "Don't you do it, sir! you'll catch your death of cold; no one ever goes to sleep on the ice in these parts."

I ATTACH MYSELF TO HIM WITH DEVOTION.

This good John is stupid, he think I say "*sleep*." I respond, "No, no! not *sleep*—slip! slip! I go to slip on the ice! I desire—Ah! I know! slippers! I desire some slippers!" John appear intelligent, he say, "Oh, slippers! Master has lots of slippers." He will fetch me some of them. Again he depart; now he return—under his arm he has many pairs of—what then? slippers? no, my faith! pantoufles! My friend, I give you my word of honour, pantoufles! John is more stupid than never. I say, "Listen then, my good John, I desire to slip, savez vous—not sleep—to slip on the ice with pattens, comprend you?" John say "You're bound to slip on the ice with pattens! Don't you try it, sir! You'll fall and hurt yourself." "But your master? *he* goes to slip on the ice, is it not?" "Master," he say; "he don't slip on the ice, perhaps it is slide you mean." "Yes, yes! without dout 'slide,' that is it—and in pattens." "No, sir, he never has pattens, only boots." "But, my faith! what is it that he attach to his boots? sliders?" "Sliders! no," say John, "perhaps it might be escates." "Ah! Ah! it is that! it is that! escates! it is escates that I desire. Can you procure me of them?" The good John can. He bring me some escates, my boots also; he attach to them the escates. That is well. I put my boots with the escates attached, I essaye to march, but I fall into the fire corner and hurt myself; it is not then easy to march at escates.

But now my friend return; he also have some boots with escates. But where? I demand of you—on his feet? No! on his neck! Is it then that one escates on the head? He say "Here you are, m'sieu! come along, my sister is ready." "But, my dear friend, it is impossible! I cannot march at escates." "Cannot march! of course not! do like this; one cannot escate without ice." "Ah! it is true—I will do as you advise." We sort; in the hall is Miss Mary, all charmante; a toque of velvet with plume of eagle; a little jaquette—petticoat you call it—of fur; a jupe all short; she also has her little pattens, escates. We arrive at the tank; two men with brooms; the ice is

smooth, bright, strong; there are some chairs. Miss Mary sits herself, M., his brother, adjust her escates; she lifts herself: she balance for a moment, and then—my faith! she glisse, slip, slide—what is it?—of an elegance altogether admirable, incroyable, ravissing! she is as a bird. "Vite! vite! m'sieu, it must that I also shall follow her!" I sit myself—my friend assist me. Ah! I am ready, en avant donc! I essaye to raise myself. Hèlas! my feet make the sudden flight, they save themselves—my chair renverses itself. I tumble on the back; my friend laugh, the two men also. Very scarcely with assistance I stand; the two men hold me at the arms—my friend at behind. "Now, m'sieu, off you go!" Vraiment I go off as they say; it is this time that I fall on my face. En verité! I am not a bird. M'sieu says:—

"Wait a moment, I will put my escates, and you shall hold my hand." I wait, very scarcely I remain. My friend approach—I seize him of both hands, I attach myself to him with devotion—I embrace him with effusion. He make some efforts frantiques; it is useless. My feet take their holiday; I extend myself all of my long, and with me him also. The ice make a crackment all loud. I do not essaye to stand more; I prefer to be asseated—it is more safe. Here is Miss Mary—she make suggestion of a chair; if I will lean myself on it I shall not fall. A chair is apported; I seize the back of it—it will not rest tranquille. I follow it; my feet depart of different routes; it appears that they are not my feet but of some other Enfin they divide themselves—I sit myself between them with violence. The wind is very strong, the chair advance always. Miss Mary and his brother are far, but at last they observe me—they haste to my assistance; they replace me at foot—they go search my chair.

M'sieu gives me the good counsel. "Place your feet all near and you will be alright; the wind will assist you." Good! I do so, the wind blows, I voyage before it as a ship. My faith, it is not then difficult; in little of time I shall be escateur, moi! The wind blows more strongly, I advance with a rapidity altogether delightful . . . My friends cry to me, I cannot hear that which they say, but no matter, no dout it is of compliment. Still my friends cry to me—the two men also—what is it that they cry? "mine thole! mine thole!" What then is "mine thole"? Then the voice of my friend. "Le trou! le trou! gare le trou!" Le trou! ma foi! where then, le trou? Ah! mon Dieu! in face, all near is a great hole in the ice! I essaye to arrest myself, but it is too late. I fall myself down, but the ice cedes, he break himself. I plonge into the water. Ah! how it makes cold! I make some efforts frantiques, I seize the ice of both hands, always it breaks itself. I cannot more—the water is in my ears.

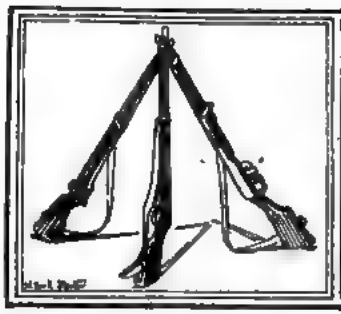
I hear some cries as in dreaming. I raise my hands in despair. What is this? I touch something hard, round, firm, it is the echelon of a ladder. I attach myself to it in pushing some grand cries; a hand seize me. I am draged from the water. I am extended on the ice as a sea-hog. I feel myself near to vanish. Miss Mary serve me of brandy, his brother remove my escates. "Merci, m'selle, do not be afright, I go better." They support me. I reach the land; they tell me: "Vite! vite! to the Hall, m'sieu, you are running with water!" "Mais, yes, sans doute, for me it is not possible to run without water, I am a sponge." At last, the Hall. I mount on high, I deshabille myself, I take a hot bath. John bring me a glass of broiled whisky. Ah Bah! it is a bagatelle. I am 'alright'; it is a pleasantry of the first rate. To-morrow I shall essaye again.

It is the caracteristique exclusive of the french people that they never despair.

Agreez, Monsieur, etc., etc.

VIVE LA FRANCE.

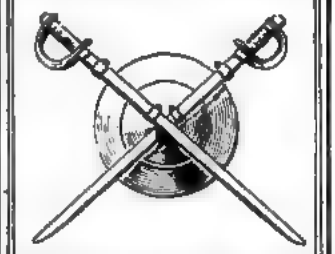
I SIT MYSELF BETWEEN THEM WITH VIOLENCE.



"HIS MAJESTY."

By Onslow Deane.

Illustrated by Antony Helmer.



MR. JOHN CLUTTERBUCK was as worthy and estimable a ratepayer as there was in the entire borough of Richmond. Every morning, with unfailing regularity, he caught the quarter past nine train from Kew Gardens to the Mansion House; and the half-past five train in the opposite direction almost invariably brought him home again. And it may safely be asserted that, during the whole fifty-four years of his life, he had been guilty of scarce half-a-dozen actions to which the greatest stickler for morals or manners could possibly have taken exception.

But even a paragon of all the proprieties has his little weaknesses, and the most vulnerable point in John Clutterbuck's armour was his undoubted resemblance to His Majesty the King. This likeness he endeavoured to accentuate by every means in his power; and the style and colour of his clothes, the cut of his hair and beard, even his very gloves and the flower in his button-hole, were an almost exact repetition of the latest fashions adopted by our gracious monarch. His other weakness was the acquisition of old china and pictures—whenever they were to be obtained at a tithe of their proper value, a thing which, thanks to his extensive and accurate knowledge of the subject, not infrequently happened. Indeed, his collection was steadily growing into a remarkably fine one, and in weak moments of confidence he had been known to assure his friends that the judicious sale of three or four of his pictures would alone more than recoup him for the whole of his expenditure upon his art treasures, and that his collection, if sent to Christie's in its entirety, would realise a sum running well into five figures.

But his enthusiasm for the old masters was as nothing in comparison with his delight whenever he was mistaken for the King. The pains he took to place himself prominently before the gaze of royalty, in the hope that he might perchance be some day mistaken for His Majesty, or, at least, become the object of complimentary notice, were incredibly ludicrous. But until his visit to Stonesea he had been obliged to rest content with attracting a merely insignificant amount of attention. Certainly, a crossing-sweeper, whose pitch he passed on the way to his office, regularly doffed his battered hat with a "Gawd bless your Majesty!" But even Mr. Clutterbuck himself was fain to admit that this greeting seemed to sometimes lack sincerity and spontaneity, although he felt it his duty to reward the knight of the broom for his loyalty to the reigning house with an honorarium of sixpence per week, doled out in six daily instalments of one penny.

Then, too, there was that red-letter Easter Monday in Kew Gardens, when his appearance was the cause of much wagering amongst a party of Whitechapel trippers. But even that affair had an inglorious ending; for, in order to avoid serious maltreatment at the hands of a burly and beer-soaked ruffian, Mr. Clutterbuck was eventually compelled to confess that he was not the King, and also to pay the bets of the losers, which, according to their rough-and-ready calculation, amounted to the sum of sixteen shillings.

However, everything comes to him who waits and works sufficiently long, and at length Mr. Clutterbuck had the *rôle* of the first gentleman in the land thrust upon him in a manner that was extremely gratifying, if somewhat alarming. The result that came of his playing the part also fell emphatically under the latter head, although the gratification was, in this case, very markedly absent. And this is how Mr. Clutterbuck's adventure came about.

He had successfully concluded a particularly arduous matter of business, and had also picked up, for a mere song, an unknown but undoubted portrait by Sir Peter Lely, and he felt that he might well reward himself with a holiday. He consequently decided to spend a week at the seaside, chose Stonesea as the locality, and engaged a couple of rooms at the "Channel Hotel"—chiefly

because it enjoyed the privilege of using the prefix "Royal." It was late in the evening when he arrived at his destination, and he spent the following forenoon in clearing off arrears of correspondence and generally settling matters, so as to allow of his enjoying the next few days entirely free from all business worries.

He had just completed his task, and was endeavouring to recollect what was supposed to be His Majesty's favourite beverage at lunch time, when the door was suddenly thrown open and two men were ushered in. They bowed low as they approached him; and when Mr. Clutterbuck jauntily wished them good-morning they were so overcome by his condescension that they cringed to the very ground.

"Hang me," reflected Mr. Clutterbuck, with much inward satisfaction, "if these fellows don't take me for the King!"

"WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF UNNECESSARILY INTRUDING UPON YOUR MAJESTY."

This was a somewhat hasty conclusion at which to arrive, but that it was the correct one was amply confirmed by the very first words their spokesman uttered.

"We have no intention of unnecessarily intruding upon your Majesty," he began, apologetically, "but we thought it our duty to take the liberty of warning your Majesty to be careful how you take your walks abroad."

Mr. Clutterbuck's face, which had been beaming with pride and gratification, suddenly became clouded with apprehension.

"But why do I need to exercise caution?" he asked, pompously. "Am I not in my own country, and among my own loyal subjects?"

"You have nothing to fear from them, sir," the man who had previously spoken interrupted, "but two notorious anarchists, by name Vernier and Sauffmann, followed your Majesty from Victoria yesterday; and we have every reason to believe that there is a plot brewing which threatens your Majesty's life."

"Threatens my life!" repeated the terror-stricken Mr. Clutterbuck, lamely. "But—but I've never wilfully hurt even a fly."

"I don't think there can be a single human being who could wish harm to your illustrious person, as far as regards the man himself," his informant replied, with a low bow. "But, unfortunately, people with the views of Sauffmann and Vernier don't give the man a thought. They only consider the position he occupies."

To this philosophic utterance Mr. Clutterbuck made no immediate reply. He was on the horns of a dilemma; for his vanity made him loath to resign his "illustrious personality," while a not unnatural regard for his own skin urged him to the conclusion that it was just now far more comfortable to be plain John Clutterbuck

than an exalted personage who ran the risk of being made the target for a little revolver practice.

"Pray do not be nervous, sir," his friend continued, encouragingly, noting Mr. Clutterbuck's obvious uneasiness. "Acres, who usually attends your Majesty, has tracked these men to lodgings in the Northbrook Road, and they'll find it a pretty hard job to dodge him. I do not think that your Majesty need have the least fear as to your absolute safety whether you choose to remain in Stonesea a week or a month."

But at this point Mr. Clutterbuck's fears outgrew his vanity, and forced him into an unwilling disclosure of his real identity.

"But—but I'm not the King," he declared. And there were actually tears standing in his eyes as he made the confession which was to strip him of his borrowed plumes. "I've been mistaken for him before, but——"

"Not the King!" gasped the detectives in unison. "Then who in the world are you, sir?"

"My name is Clutterbuck—John Clutterbuck, of Lebanon Villa, Thames Avenue, Richmond, Surrey, and senior partner of Clutterbuck, Fargus & Smith, merchants, Mansion House Buildings"—Mr. Clutterbuck began to explain unsteadily.

"Clutterbuck!" interrupted Mr. Elliott, with an astonishment and admiration that were as balm in Gilead to His Majesty's understudy. "Why, you must be the gentleman whom the King once described to Acres as his double. And upon my word, sir, you and he are as like one another as two peas in a pod. The resemblance is simply astounding—anyway, it has deceived a brace of the sharpest scoundrels in Europe, besides—well, not the worst pair of officers at the Yard."

"Does anything strike you, Mr. Elliott?" broke in Mr. Bland, at this point, with impressive solemnity.

"It has just struck me, Mr. Bland, that if we can only contrive to keep Sauffmann and Vernier here for a week or so, till the extradition papers arrive from the Continent, His Majesty will be safe," replied Mr. Elliott, with an appearance of vast wisdom.

His coadjutor nodded affirmatively.

"Precisely my own opinion, Mr. Elliott," he muttered, with the abstracted air of a Cambridge don wrestling with an intricate problem in advanced mathematics.

"We thought it a little strange, too, Mr. Clutterbuck, that the King should have come to Stonesea yesterday," Mr. Elliott continued, "for he is due to-day at Lord Sandover's place in Berkshire. But between us we must try and detain these anarchists here until the evidence necessary to warrant their arrest has been obtained, even if we have to get the local police to lock them up during that time on some charge or another."

"Is that the best you can do?" inquired Mr. Bland, smiling pityingly at his colleague.

"Of course, there is another way, Bland," returned Mr. Elliott, testily. "But I really don't see how we can ask so great a favour of a perfectly disinterested party."

"It would be no harm to put the question, I think," Mr. Bland replied, gently scratching his chin as he ran his eye in professional style over Mr. Clutterbuck, beginning at the top of his scantily thatched crown and ending with the soles of his patent-leather boots. "For, as you say, the likeness is certainly marvellously striking."

"I have known of people receiving the thanks of Parliament, and a handle to their name besides, for a smaller service to the State," remarked Mr. Elliott, thoughtfully, as he, in his turn, allowed his gaze to wander over Mr. Clutterbuck's portly person.

Very possibly the latter may have been influenced by Mr. Elliott's last remark, and he certainly did not forget that it was the King's life which was in danger. But he nevertheless proved that he had real grit in him, and that even stout and elderly City gentlemen may only fail to be heroes through lack of opportunity.

"If it is your opinion, gentlemen," he said, with quiet dignity, after a few moments' consideration, "that my remaining at Stonesea in the character of His Most Gracious Majesty will aid the capture of these villains, and prevent their attempting his life, I place myself entirely and unreservedly in your hands."

"You are making a noble sacrifice, Mr. Clutterbuck," cried Mr. Elliott, enthusiastically.

"Splendid, sir, splendid!" exclaimed Mr. Bland, no less warmly. "That's the stuff Englishmen are made of! I think, Elliott, that it is merely right and proper that we should draw up a short memorandum of Mr. Clutterbuck's generous offer, with a view to forwarding it to the proper quarter."

This idea met with the warm approval of his partner; and Mr. Clutterbuck himself, his face crimson with pleasure, also agreed, with becoming modesty, to the proposal. Mr. Elliott thereupon obtained some sheets of the hotel notepaper, and in a very short space of time he was able to hand Mr. Clutterbuck a copy of the following statement:—

"*I, John Clutterbuck, of Lebanon Villa, Thames Avenue, Richmond, Surrey, senior partner in the firm of Clutterbuck, Fargus & Smith, Mansion House Buildings, City, merchants, hereby declare*

that I have been mistaken for His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII. by the notorious anarchists, Vernier and Sauffmann, and that the aforesaid Vernier and Sauffmann, acting under this error, have followed me with murderous intent to the town of Stonesea. I voluntarily agree to run all the risks involved in my continuing to carry out the deception, and trust that my action may be the means of His Majesty being preserved from the attempt at assassination which the aforesaid Vernier and Sauffmann are believed to be plotting against him. And, in furtherance of this scheme, I am prepared, although at great loss and inconvenience to myself, to remain at Stonesea for any period not exceeding seven days, which may be sufficient to allow of Messrs. Bland and Elliott, of Scotland Yard, obtaining the requisite papers for the arrest of the aforesaid Vernier and Sauffmann."

Mr. Clutterbuck, with praiseworthy honesty, pointed out that as he was taking a holiday the "great loss and inconvenience" was rather in the nature of an exaggeration. But upon Mr. Elliott assuring him that a little embroidery of that sort might perhaps mean the difference between a mere C.B. and a K.C.B. he withdrew his opposition, and prepared to sign the memorandum.

The body of the statement covered three sides of a sheet of notepaper; and Mr. Clutterbuck, after carefully selecting a pen which permitted of his writing his autograph in his very best style, signed his name, under Mr. Elliott's direction, at the top of the fourth page. His signature was duly witnessed by the two gentlemen from Scotland Yard; and, this formality completed, Mr. Elliott placed the document in an envelope, which, after carefully sealing, he proceeded to endorse—

"*The statement of John Clutterbuck, Esquire, with regard to the matter of His Majesty the King and the Anarchists, Vernier and Sauffmann.*"

"I am obliged to return to London to-morrow morning, sir, to attend to the preparation of the necessary papers," he said, as he placed the packet in his breast-pocket. "I will then see that your memorandum is at once forwarded to the Home Secretary, who will, in due course, bring it to the notice of His Majesty the King, as well as that of the Lord Chancellor and the Prime Minister. And I'll wire to the Yard at once for a couple of the smartest officers that can be spared to come down and act with Mr. Bland in looking after your security and well-being."

"I will stake my professional reputation that Mr. Clutterbuck shall be as safe here as if he were at home in Richmond," declared Mr. Bland, with calm self-confidence. "But don't let me prevent your sending the wire, Elliott. Possibly Acres can do with another man, or unforeseen complications may arise. One never knows; and if I am to guarantee this gentleman's safety, I certainly cannot also guarantee to assist Acres at a moment's notice."

"Very well," said Detective Elliott; "I feel I can now leave you with the certain knowledge that your noble and disinterested action will entail no evil consequences upon you whatever. I fear we have kept you a very long time, sir, over this business, but I am sure that you are not the gentleman to begrudge it when it has been so well spent. There is only one thing more, I think, and that is to impress upon you the absolute necessity for secrecy. Please do not say a word, sir, not only to strangers, but even to your best friend, before we have safely effected the arrest. I hope you will permit us to once more thank you, sir, for the assistance that your courageous offer has afforded us."

With this the detectives bowed themselves out, and Mr. Clutterbuck was left alone to ponder over the marvellous good fortune that had befallen him. Man of peace though he essentially was, it was not long before he arrived at the stage of almost hoping that he might really be shot at—especially if the bullets of the anarchists either missed him altogether or inflicted some merely trifling injury. And then the staid, elderly, matter-of-fact Mr. Clutterbuck proceeded to weave a succession of rose-coloured day-dreams that would have shamed the fertile imagination of some beardless countryman bound for the gold-paved streets trodden by Dick Whittington. He saw himself victorious in hand-to-hand conflict with Vernier and Sauffmann; the flaring contents bills of the newspapers next morning, the photographs of himself in the illustrated periodicals, the flattering interviews in the magazines, the encomiums of the leader-writers on this latest example of British pluck, all passed pleasantly in review before him. He had actually reached the point of arranging the headings of a telling speech on alien immigration, to be delivered to a spell-bound House by Sir John Clutterbuck, M.P., K.C.B., when a suave waiter demolished all his castles in the air at one fell swoop, by the commonplace announcement that lunch was ready. Mr. Clutterbuck did not exactly relish being thus rudely brought back to the realities of every-day life; but he nevertheless commanded the fellow, with the supercilious air that he imagined the King himself might have assumed under similar circumstances, to get him a small bottle of the best champagne the establishment could produce, and forthwith marched haughtily into the dining-room.

As the hours and days passed slowly by, Mr. Clutterbuck continued to dream, with remarkable

facility, of the honours that would rain thick upon him. But even his less vivid imaginings showed no sign of coming true; indeed, his stay at Stonesea was uneventful in the extreme. Mr. Bland was often to be seen in the neighbourhood of the hotel, and he was usually in evidence whenever Mr. Clutterbuck ventured abroad. Occasionally Mr. Clutterbuck spoke to him and made inquiries as to how matters were progressing. But that reticence which is so conspicuous a trait in our police force was developed in Mr. Bland to a remarkable extent. Indeed, he carried his secrecy so far, that had it been anyone else but the astute Inspector Bland—a man who knew not what it was to fail—Mr. Clutterbuck would have been greatly inclined to rate his intelligence on but slightly higher a level than that of the average village constable. But, after six days of mingled anxiety, pride, and disappointment, a letter reached Mr. Clutterbuck which told him that his impersonation—an impersonation of which, to his secret grief, the Stonesea populace seemed serenely unconscious—had not been unavailing.

The letter was dated from Scotland Yard, and ran as follows:—

DEAR SIR,—I hope to effect the arrest of Vernier and Sauffmann to-morrow afternoon or evening, when the necessary papers will be complete. I should have done so to-day had not a technical difficulty unexpectedly arisen as to Vernier. I would advise you to remain as far as possible indoors during to-morrow; but there is no reason why you should not return to London on the following day, unless Mr. Bland should warn you to the contrary.

Our chief has forwarded your statement to the Home Office, and no doubt you will hear more of it very shortly. But pray on no account mention this to a single soul just at present, for nothing has yet been officially notified.

The entire staff of Scotland Yard desires me to express to you its grateful thanks for your co-operation, and to warmly congratulate you on the well-merited success attending your brave action.—I am, dear sir, your obedient servant,

SAMUEL ELLIOTT (Inspector).

To J. Clutterbuck, Esq.

On the morning following the receipt of this letter, Mr. Bland called at the "Channel Hotel," and informed Mr. Clutterbuck that the arrest had been satisfactorily carried out, and that his duties were consequently at an end. Mr. Clutterbuck, in the fulness of his heart, thereupon pressed a five-pound note into the detective's not unwilling hand, and at once set about making his preparations for an immediate return to Richmond.

But an unpleasant surprise awaited him at his journey's end. He found Lebanon Villa shut up and deserted, the blinds down, and the doors locked; and of Mrs. Betts, his housekeeper, whom he had left in charge, there was nothing to be seen. He was wandering about his garden in much perturbation, vainly racking his brain for some solution to the mystery, when he was espied by his next-door neighbour, who promptly came to his assistance.

"Hallos, Clutterbuck, is that you?" he shouted, in evident surprise. "Where's the wife?"

"Wife! Whose wife?" snapped Mr. Clutterbuck, whose temper was not in a sufficiently equable condition to permit him to properly appreciate his neighbour's wit.

"Whose wife? Why, your own, of course," exclaimed his friend, with an astonishment that was obviously natural. "But we didn't expect you for another week or ten days, and none of the new furniture has come yet."

"New furniture!" repeated Mr. Clutterbuck, feebly. "For Heaven's sake explain yourself, Jenkins! I think I must be dreaming—or going mad."

"Five days ago," began Mr. Jenkins, who feared that his friend must be, indeed, suffering from some temporary aberration of mind, "a furniture van came here, and the man in charge showed Mrs. Betts your written authority to clear all that rubbishy old stuff of yours out of the house and replace it with good, substantial, modern furniture. I must admit, knowing how much you thought of your things, that we were all a trifle surprised; but the fellow said that he understood you were shortly to be married, and that, we, of course, considered a perfectly satisfactory explanation. Anyhow, he packed Mrs. Betts off for a week's holiday, and, since then, he has taken away every stick of furniture you had."

The only comment on this intelligence that Mr. Clutterbuck was capable of making was a dismal groan.

"He left the keys with me when he had finished," continued Mr. Jenkins, volubly, "and I also have that authority of yours that I spoke of. Perhaps you'd like to come into my place and see it?"

"I should, indeed, Jenkins," gasped Mr. Clutterbuck, whose anger and perplexity as his friend unfolded his tale were quite painful to witness. "I am entirely at a loss to understand what you mean—there must surely be some terrible mistake about it all."

After a very short search Mr. Jenkins was able to produce the document in question. It was apparently written on a sheet of ordinary note-paper, and as he handed it to Mr. Clutterbuck, back uppermost, there appeared to the latter's astonished gaze:—

(Signed) John Clutterbuck.

Samuel Elliott } *Witnesses.*
Arthur W. Bland }

Mr. Clutterbuck snatched at the paper with feverish haste, and tremblingly turned to the first page. It was headed, as he had expected: "The Channel Hotel, Stonesea," but it contained nothing whatever about His Majesty the King or John Clutterbuck's noble sacrifice. Instead, there appeared a peremptory order to his housekeeper to permit Mr. Butterworth, of Blake, Butterworth & Edge, dealers in, and manufacturers of high-class furniture, to remove everything that might be on the premises at Lebanon Villa, preparatory to an entire re-furnishing.

"I've been the victim of a wicked and cruel hoax, Jenkins," Mr. Clutterbuck exclaimed excitedly, his face purple with rage, when he had come again to the page containing the signatures. And he thereupon proceeded to give his neighbour, who during the recital had much ado to stifle his

HE PRESSED A FIVE-POUND NOTE INTO THE DETECTIVE'S NOT UNWILLING HAND.

amusement, a full account of all that had transpired during his visit to Stonesea.

"It was a providential thing—a most providential thing—that I was wise enough to insure against burglary before I left home," he concluded, with sorrowful satisfaction. "I believe the terms of my policy will cover my loss; but I'd better just run up to town and see my lawyers about it. And I'll go to Scotland Yard, too, without delay, and put some real detectives on the track of those two arch-rascals, Elliott and Bland."

While in town Mr. Clutterbuck also paid a third visit—to a hairdresser. And it is quite certain that nobody could have possibly mistaken the clean-shaven gentleman who returned that night to Richmond for the double of His Majesty the King of England.

The Scotland Yard people were unable to lay their hands on the persons who had so successfully understudied them; but Mr. Clutterbuck—still plain Mr. Clutterbuck—has since been fortunate enough to re-purchase some of his own treasures at prices which even he considers extremely moderate.

THE OLD FAG'S DIARY.

Press Day for Christmas Number.

5 a.m.—Rise. Take cold bath (ugh!). Get out my trusty lanthorn, and grope my way downstairs. Fall over a loose stair-rod. Eh? What? Hush! 'Member good resolutions made on January 1st.

5.30 a.m.—Prepare own breakfast. Don't seem to fancy the porridge.

6 a.m. No trains or 'buses running, so have to tramp it up to the office, carrying bag. Stopped by policeman. Thinks am burglar. Show him "proofs." Quite sufficient. "Pass along!"

7 a.m.—I pass a long time before I get into the office, because find left keys at home. Not worth while going back. Wait for boy.

8.30 a.m.—Boy arrives. Feel inclined to—eh? What? 'Member good resolutions on January 1st. Boy very cold and cross. Me too. Nem'mind. "Christmas comes but once a year and when it comes it brings good——" *I deny it!*

9 a.m.—Send boy out for more breakfast. Tackle letters. Telephone rings. "Hullo! Hullo! Hullo! What? Fish! No, never ordered any fish! What? No, this is CAPTAIN Office, not 'Hotel Cecil.' What? No, this—is—CAPTAIN—Magazine for boys and—— Eh, what say? Oh, you bad man! Why did I ring you up? I didn't! I don't want any fish! Eh! Silly old josser? Look here, I'll come round and interview you, you scoundrel! *I tell you we don't want any fish!* Eh? I *didn't* ring you up. Eh? No, we are not the 'Hotel Cecil.' We are THE CAPTAIN, a magazine for boys and—eh? Heard that before! Well, why don't you go away then?" (*Goes away.*) Return to our desk and tackle letters anew. We are ruffled, but we remember our good resolutions made on January 1st.

11 a.m.—Still tackling letters and 'membering good resolutions.

1 p.m.—Telephone. "Hullo! Hullo! No, don't want any fish! Eh? Not fish? Who the Spelling Bee are you? Oh—*printer!* Well, what is it? Still waiting for Old Fag's 'copy.' Go on waiting then. Eh? Must get to press! What? Got to go to wedding to-morrow? Whose wedding? Own wedding! Impossible! Send one of the men! Eh? All married? Don't believe it. Must postpone wedding. Can't! Must! Can't! Must! Eh? No, not a new game! Eh? All right. Will send 'copy' along by——" (*Switched off suddenly by Exchange girl.*)

1.30 p.m.—Lunch. Recruit shattered energies.

3.30 p.m.—Back. Boy says telephone been ringing half-an-hour. Go to telephone. "Hullo! Hullo! Hullo! Who are you? Eh? You're who? Please speak up! What? Eh? No, we're not 'Hotel Cecil.' No—not hotel—eh? Look here, why can't you say who you are? You *are* saying who you are? Well—what? You want to know who *we* are? We'll tell you who we are when we know who you are. What? You won't tell us who you are until we've told you who we are—eh? *Speak up!* What? No, we are not 'Hotel Cecil'-r-r-r-r-r-s-s-s-s." (*Stay by telephone another ten minutes, but can only catch confused murmurs, so give it up as a bad job.*)

4 p.m.—In an exasperated and heated way go on getting Christmas Number to press.

5 p.m.—Go out to tea. Recruit shattered energies. On way back catch sight of Idea Merchant. He sees me. I make a wide circuit; pretend I'm going home. After a long and wet walk return to find Idea Merchant waiting for me in the office.

7 p.m.—Idea Merchant still suggesting articles. Telephone ringing; telegram boys following each other in a sort of procession. Four callers waiting in outer office. Half the magazine still to pass for press. At wits' end. Uncertain which way to turn. Interview four callers all at once. They all go, and all come back to mention something they'd forgotten to mention before. Feel am going mad. Piles of letters—still telegram boys come—telephone keeps on ringing—feel am going madder—get desperate—life not worth living—reach for coat—jab on hat—light cigar—say magazine can see itself to press—wash my hands of it—*let* the telephone ring—*let* the telegrams telegram—head burstin'—button up coat—put on gloves—laugh defiantly—lock up the office—stride out into the street, and

8 p.m.—Go to *San Toy* with Idea Merchant.

"STOP, SIRRAH! STOP HIM, YOU LOUT!" (See page 217.)

A CAVALIER MAID.

The Romance of a King's Messenger.

By Clifford Mills.

Illustrated by E. F. Skinner.

Etienne Glanvil, an orphan, grand-daughter of the celebrated French soldier, the Marquis de Latour, is living with distant relations—Sir Geoffrey and Lady Stapleton—near Torrington, in Devonshire, when the Parliamentary troops rout the Western Loyalists and drive them towards the Cornish border of Devon. Etienne by chance meets a wounded Cavalier, who is carrying a message from the king to Lord Hopton; owing to circumstances recounted in the opening chapters of the story, it devolves upon her to deliver the King's packet to the Loyalist general. She is suspected of being in possession of the packet by Giles Harrison, a Roundhead officer and suitor for her hand. With the idea of hurrying into Torrington in search of one Stephen Gale, who is favourable to the King, Etienne leaves the Stapletons' house by a secret door only to stumble upon a Roundhead sentinel, who would have detained her but for the intervention of an unknown officer, who proved to be none other than the great Fairfax. Arrived at Torrington, Etienne is so angered by the rejoicings of the crowd at the rout of the Loyalists that she forgets herself, and cries "Shame on ye all, traitors!" Ill would have befallen her had not a huge man carried her into safety at his own house. The man proves to be Stephen Gale. She is suspected of being a traitress by the wounded Cavalier himself, who escapes from the town and makes for the inn at Langtree. To escape the Roundheads and follow to Langtree to deliver to him the letter, she enters a deserted house and there finds a young gentleman's discarded dress.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE KING'S NAME.

I SAT down on the edge of the bed for a moment, and a thousand thoughts flitted through my brain. A maid could do little—but a youth might do much. A maid was watched for, suspected, even by those she longed to serve, but a youth—why, a youth! Oh!—what might not he do?

I tossed my head and drew in a deep breath of hope and freedom. It seemed to me so simple, if I could but find heart to venture.

Then I minded me how tall I grew for a maid, and I sprang to my feet and squared my shoulders and threw back my head, so that, catching sight of myself in the mirror, I blushed all rosy-red at my own conceit.

For indeed I had found mind to do it, and, this being so, not a moment was there to lose. Yet first did I bend and kiss the King's letter, in no sorrow now, but in all reverence, dedicating my undertaking to this shrine of my heart's devotion.

In the days not so long ago, when my lady had affected the cause of the King, my cousin Hal had found much pleasure in vieing with the gayest of the young gallants who, much to Sir Geoffrey's dissatisfaction, had thronged Stapleton. With a girl's love of prettiness, I had lent my aid to set him off to advantage, and much store he had put on my help, in the curling of feathers and the starching of his laces. This being so, I knew much of the best manner of wearing the gauds before me. Nor did I feel compunction in appropriating them to my use. It was in the King's name, and for aught I knew they had belonged to a servant of his. Of certes, they looked it.

To my satisfaction, I found them beyond expectation in the matter of fit. Neither passing tall nor broad had been their owner, and, of a surety, it seemed to me more than chance that had led me to such a finding.

I had taken needle and thread from the housewife that ever hung at my side, but small need found I for its use. The doublet of mouse-coloured velvet was in truth too wide, but when I had donned the sash of cherry colour, and adjusted the cape, there was little of which one could complain. The hat was a grey beaver with a feather of each shade of the attire, caught with a cerise favour and pinned with a silver brooch in the form of an antelope—as pretty a device as I had ever seen.

Walking to the mirror I shook down my curls. Then, placing the hat on my head, in the same careless fashion once so approved by Hal, I regarded myself in the glass.

I was bound to confess I looked passing well. Though I scarce knew myself for falling auburn lovelocks and nodding plumes, 'twas a right courtly youth to whom I now bowed in saucy merriment, and wished good luck.

For, in truth, I had put courage on with my new attire, and it was with almost careless indifference that I walked to the door of the

chamber, in riding boots which at first had caused me some misgivings, so small felt my poor feet inside them.

The packet I placed with care inside my doublet, and having bestowed my purse safely in my pouch, and hidden my own clothes where I had found those I was wearing, I took up a riding whip that lay on the floor, and, calling to remembrance Hal's manner of walking and dignity of demeanour, I assumed them as best I could, and opening the door softly gained the staircase.

Despite my courageous bearing, my heart beat painfully, as, half-way down its shadowy descent, I saw a man ascending. Nor was my alarm lessened when I recognised in him a Spanish fellow of the name of Juan Riaz, a disreputable relative of Giles Harrison. But no sooner did he catch sight of me standing above him in the light of the window, than he jumped as if shot, and a deadly pallor overcrept his face. Twice he tried to speak, but no words came from his shaking lips; his hands clutching at his scraggy throat, in which the veins stood like cords, as if he fought for breath.

So alarmed was I by his frightful appearance—for a more villainous face I ne'er had seen—that I stood tremblingly beholding him. Seeing, however, that the light was streaming into the hall below, I concluded that the door leading into the street was open, and determined, whatever came, to at once make a dash for liberty.

But, at the first step I placed on the stairs, the fellow shrieked aloud, and, crouching against the wall, covered his face with his hands, calling out, "Mercy, mercy! 'Twas not I who wronged thee!"

In much terror I fled past him, madman that he appeared, and thankful indeed was I to gain the street without his interference.

Once there, I stepped out as boldly as I had planned. The rain had ceased to fall, but underfoot it was miry and wet. Passing strange did it seem that I might tramp so easily through mud and dirt, and at first, when I came to a miry spot, back went my hand to lift my skirts o'er it, and then up blushed my cheeks at not finding them. But this was only for a few yards, for much did I caution and admonish myself to remember that the street was full of spies, and that, if I would play my part to escape detection, I must endeavour to forget the maid I was, in the youth I appeared to be.

So I stepped out well, with no maid's mincings. But a wilful wind that had sprung up blew my lovelocks athwart my eyes, and my cape round my shoulders, so that I soon found a youth had his difficulties to contend with, even though unhampered by flowing petticoats.

Few people noticed me unduly; in the first place the twilight was beginning to fall, and the streets were less thronged with rejoicing rebels, and those who turned to look probably accounted me some gay spark from Stephenston, who, being young, knew not yet the folly of feathers and laces. So I walked on rapidly with little fear that, should my face escape detection, my attire would cause suspicion.

Now an inn stood at the base of the hilly street down which I was hurrying. Its windows overlooked the river's bridge that my feet were burning to cross, and to this inn I was pressing. For here, if anywhere, could I procure that which would enable me to overtake the Cavalier at Langtree, namely, a horse. With some shyness which I made every effort to conceal, I passed in and lost no time in seeking the landlord. But at my demand for a horse at once, he threw up his hands at the hopelessness of the request.

But, remembering my *rôle*, I stamped my foot as Hal would have done, and, imitating his well-known tone, reduced mine host to so satisfactory a state of humility, that he sent off a stable boy at once with a command that he must not return without a horse, and that a proper one.

"That suits thee, sir," cried he, with a well-oiled smile. But I, still taking my cousin for copy, eyed him with disdain.

"We will talk of suiting," said I, "when we see what thy boy procures," and, demanding that I might be shown to a chamber where I could rest awhile, I turned from him with much haughtiness.

An apple-cheeked girl showed me to a chamber above, the window of which gave view of the bridge I so longed to traverse. Fearing observation, I partook here of what refreshment I needed; and then bidding the maid—whose ogling afforded me much discomfort—acquaint me on the instant of my steed's arrival, I threw myself on the bed to rest awhile. For in truth I was weary, and that well-nigh to faintness.

Lying thus, I pondered on my journey, the aspect of which was, even now, formidable enough. Of a surety, in the dear gone-by days of my childhood, had I oft ridden the same road with my father, but to no public ways must I now trust my journeying, if I hoped to reach my destination in safety. So I lay, striving to recall once well-known by-paths—by such a lane, and such a copse would I go.

Alas! the grey dawn entreating my eyelids was to what mine eyes opened. Stupefied, I sprang up and gazed round, and like a loosened flood came remembrance, half stunning me with the potency of its rush.

My first thought was for the letter I carried, and finding it was still safely in my keeping, I

breathed more freely. But the next moment I uttered a cry of despair, for day, day was here, and the safeguard for my journey—yesterday's password—of what would it now avail me?

I rushed to the window, and, pulling aside the curtain, looked out. A grey mist hung above the river and hid the opposite banks from view, but, not a soul being about in the street, nor hearing anyone in the inn below, I adjudged it still to be early morning.

There was yet a chance that the guard of yesterday was unchanged. But to think that I should have slumbered with so much at stake. I could have cried with vexation, and dare not trust myself to think of what the consequences of my delay might be.

I crossed the room with feverish haste, and stayed only to bathe my face and adjust my attire. Ah! the foolhardiness to have lingered! Night, kind night, with her mantle of concealment, had flown without my using it, and here was the garish day abroad, to point me out, and twit of my doings to every sparrow that chose to fix its curious glance upon me.

In my mortification and self-reproach I felt I deserved all misfortunes that would doubtless attend me. That faithless landlord, who had flouted mine order, and allowed me thus to slumber, probably in payment of mine insolence! Or, worse thought far, was he in the pay of mine enemies, and had purpose in his action? Such doubts were intolerable. Donning my hat with haste, I opened the door and walked out on to the landing.

Not a soul was about. Much inclined was I to fly from the inn with all speed, and as little ceremony as possible. But to go thus without payment was a contemptible thing to do, and moreover might, if I was discovered in the act, lead to my longer delay, if not detection.

So without further argument with myself, I raised my voice and called out sharply for attendance.

A moment afterwards a door at my left opened, and, looking round quickly, instead of finding the innkeeper as I expected, I saw a man eyeing me with astonishment, from a half-open door.

His fixed look of deep scrutiny alarmed me greatly, and, forgetting all caution, down the stairs I ran, to stumble in the passage below, across a snoring stable-boy, who slept, head on table, by the side of a guttering candle.

At my exclamation he jumped to his feet and rubbed his eyes.

"The horse, sir?" he cried, blinking and spluttering.

"Yes," cried I, scarce knowing what I said "the horse, sirrah! Is this the way orders are kept at the 'Torridge Inn'?"

"'Tis ready, sir," he replied hastily, walking to the door. "I acquainted thine honour some hours ago, as did my master, but though we knocked and called a full score of times we could not awaken your lordship. At this my master did away to bed, bidding me await your honour's pleasure."

So this was the way I had kept faith with the King. Worthless, foolish maiden, slumbering like a blockhead at such a time. I was too crestfallen to even reply to the lad, who had by this time led me to the stable, where I found as pretty a cob awaiting me as I could have wished.

As the lad adjusted the bridle which he had removed, he told me it had been a night of wind and rain.

"They who retreat," said he with a wink, "will find it bad weather. Moreover," he added, "the Parliament men are hot after them. Twice this night have a company of troopers rode over Taddyport Bridge on their way to Holsworthy."

Twice that night, and I—with an impatient hand I seized the reins he held, and, having settled mine account with a surplus for his benefit, sprang to the saddle, and this latter without difficulty, having ofttimes ridden in like manner when a child. Then with all speed I turned my horse's head to leave the yard.

At this moment, however, a casement was flung hastily open, and in imperative tones that rang out into the still morning air a voice called:—

"Stop, sirrah!—Stop him, you lout!"

So unexpected was this, that, taken by surprise, I half reined in my horse, while the stable boy, fingering the coins I had given him, looked from the owner of the voice to me in gaping wonder.

Glancing behind, I saw a man but partly attired had pushed his head and shoulders as far through a casement above as its narrow limits would allow. I had no difficulty in recognising, in the handsome face and iron grey lovelocks, the gentleman who had stared at me from the landing of the inn.

Not a second waited I. Before the dull-brained lad at my side had taken in the meaning of the challenge, I was away through the gate with all speed to the bridge of the Taddyport.

CHAPTER X.

A RIDE FOR THE KING.

UT of the mist that overhung the bridge, a sentry loomed, and challenged me.

With all the assurance I could muster, I sang out the countersign. But he still stood in my path. All in a tremor, I waited and

tried to speak, but my heart failed me! I made then as if I would pass him, but he caught my bridle rein.

"What means this?" cried I, in a voice sharpened by alarm.

"It means, sir," replied the man, in firm but respectful tone, "that you leave too late, or start too early. The password of yesterday will not take your honour far to-day."

"Yesterday!" I cried. "Yesterday!"

And then, maid that I was for all my brave attire, down went my head, and out I sobbed like a babe, for bitter disappointment and aching remorse.

The man looked up at me in surprise, but I cared not, nor offered excuse. I did not even try to stay the tears which rolled down my cheeks. I had said the time for weeping would come when all hope had fled, and here was despair at last.

Apparently realising that in me he had no troublesome customer, the man stood at my side in quietness, only muttering, by way of sympathy, that 'twas passing early to have changed the guard.

"Though in such times as these," he added, "one follows not custom, for greater caution."

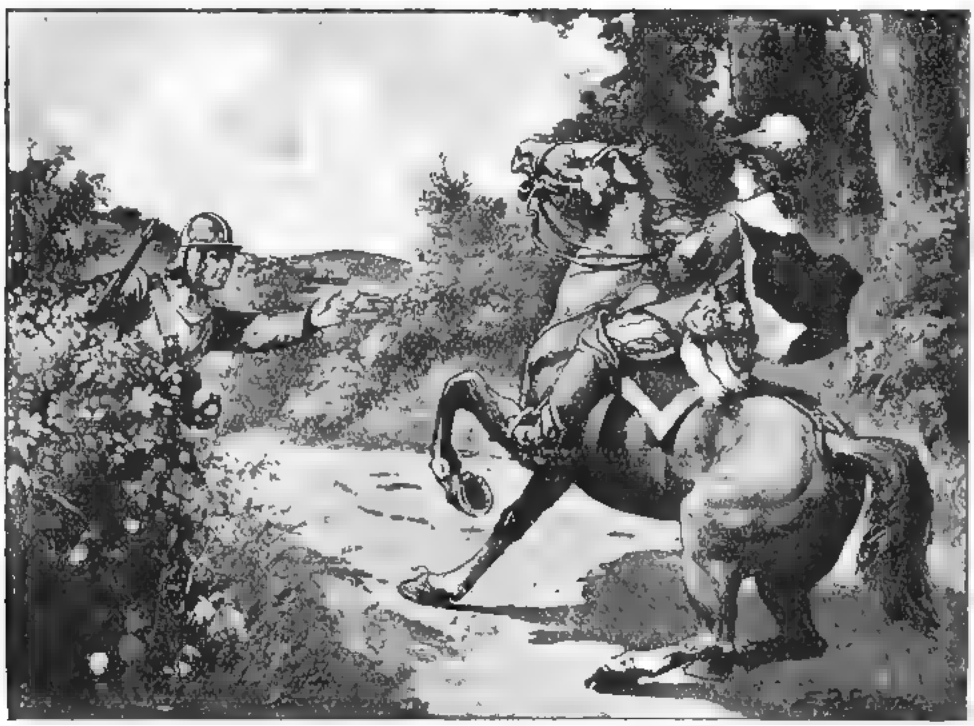
Alas, it was but as I had foreboded. "'Tis mine own fault," I sobbed. "Why tarried I?"

"Nay, but my lad," cried he, kindly, "none could blame thee; 'tis ill-luck, indeed, that has made thee miss thy chance by just ten minutes."

I stared at him then. Had Fate been so capricious? But he caught my bridle hand, and wheeled round my horse.

"I have it!" cried he. "Dry thine eyes, mother's son that thou art! If thou canst ride as fast as thou canst weep, thou wilt overtake the guard ere they reach West Bridge. Stay not, but on, and good luck to thee, for the prettiest ninny alive."

I waited to hear no more. Off like the wind went I, round past the inn, along the bank of the river, my curls drying my eyes as I flew. Ah! he might laugh at me for my womanish tears, but he should wager I rode with the best. On I went, not daring to hope, yet despair dying hard at each bound of my horse's hoofs, until, through the mist, I saw nearing the bridge the little company of men upon the overtaking of whom hung all my hopes. At a swinging march they went, the morning light picking out their orange sashes—base badges of their disloyalty. But low down



A SENTRY, WHO STOOD CONCEALED BEHIND A HEDGE, SPRANG FORTH AND CHALLENGED ME.

to my horse's head bent I. I rode for the King. Should rebels win?

The yards were dwindling between us, when, at the sound of my approach, the sergeant turned round, halbert in hand, and faced me. Astonishment was in his gaze, and, fearing his intent, I pulled my horse almost to the water's edge as I rode past him to the bridge beyond. A sentry stood on its threshold, and to his challenge I replied with the password, which was so soon to be changed, then waited, sick with apprehension.

Looking to the approaching guard, who were now almost at the turning, he hesitated; but, without more ado, I rode straight in his path, and, muttering something to himself, he stepped aside, and permitted me to pass without further comment.

Had I now followed the promptings of fear, I should have let haste be my only councillor, for almost unendurable was the anxiety in my breast. But, realising how perilous was still my safety, surrounded as I was by the enemy, I curbed my impatience, and rode slowly across to the other side of the bridge.

Here, in a shed, upon benches, a few men lounged or slept. Some looked up as I passed, and glanced at me suspiciously, but, hearing my reply to their comrade's challenge, they turned each to his occupation, and over the bridge was I at last, without let or hindrance.

Ah! what a heart was mine as I rode up the slope beyond to the road! It seemed too good a fortune to be true, after so much peril.

I was calling to mind the way I had planned, and my good little mare was taking me up the hill with a haste of her own setting, when, as we neared the summit, a sentry, who stood concealed behind a hedge, sprang forth and challenged me. As much startled by this as myself, my horse swerved with such suddenness to the opposite side of the road that I was well-nigh unseated.

Recovering myself with difficulty, I found, to my chagrin, that my hat had dropped from my head, and was now held by the soldier, who stood well in my path.

Plucking up my courage, which was somewhat shaken by this sudden encounter, I repeated the password, and requested him to give me my hat.

This he did at once. As he handed it to me, however, he glanced up at me, sitting thus bareheaded, and our eyes met.

Alack! as ill luck would have it, it was a fellow who knew me well, having served at Stapleton before becoming one of the company of troopers Sir Geoffrey himself had arrayed and mustered.

For a moment he looked into my face with puzzled scrutiny, whilst I, with thumping heart, but assumed carelessness, adjusted my hat and gathered up my reins. Then, peering more closely, he started back, thunderstruck. "Marry!" cried he, "'tis Mademoiselle, the French girl they are seeking!"

But his look had prepared me for this recognition. Ere he had time to recover himself I was well past him, galloping along the road. His wits must have deserted him for the time, for I heard him shouting and running behind me for a moment or two, but, these sounds ceasing suddenly, I cast a quick glance behind me. Dear heart! he stood in the act of firing, musket on crutch in the middle of the road!

This much saw I before the shot rang out behind me. The next instant I was gripping and clutching to saddle and bridle, realising with consternation that the horse I rode had taken advantage of my temporary distraction to secure the bit between her teeth, and was now carrying me full tilt whither she listed.

'Twas all I could do to keep my seat, maddened by fear as she was, but the thought of the honourableness of mine errand strengthened me, and cling I did, whilst, at every bound she gave, the country seemed to fly behind me.

On with the wind up the hill went she, and my thoughts flew as fast as her hoofs, as I clung for dear life, aye, more than life, till my eyes grew dizzy and my head swam.

Already, in the village of Fritholstock below, was my approach noticed, and, ere I reached the Priory there, a man rushed forward and strove to catch my mare's head. But she, jumping aside, eluded his grasp, and, half turning, dashed down a by-path, and so into the open country beyond.

Though it was no easy travelling, yet my heart lightened, for, good little mare that she was, she was but carrying me with thrice the speed the way I had planned.

For not far away from me lay Langtree Common, to whose rounded knolls and wooded combes I had meant to trust my journeying. But I had not more than congratulated myself at the thought, when my mare, whose pace had at each moment been flagging, came to a sudden standstill, and over her head I shot, missing breaking my neck by a miracle.

Picking myself up I found little damage done, and my mare close to my side regarding me with amazement. Catching her bridle I walked on apace, glancing to right and left of me cautiously.

I found myself on the brow of a hill. Below me lay a deep and narrow valley, and far away in front rose a stately hill, all covered with larches, their leafless branches tender purple in the morning light. Close to my left was a wood which ran

down the hill to the valley, and to this I now led my mare, intending to use its shelter in gaining the road below.

But I had scarce entered it when over the hill whence I had but just come a horseman came flying, and behind him half a score of dragooners. Without a glance behind, the pursued rode straight towards the wood in which I stood; but down upon him came the troopers, and, seeing this, he reined in his horse, and waited, swearing with such volubility I would fain have closed my ears, had not surprise held me spell-bound, for in this stranger I recognised the gentleman who had challenged me from the window of the inn.

Meantime, two dragooners had come up to him. One on each side of his horse they rode, and made to seize his rein. But, raising the whip he carried, he dealt so smart a blow on the hand of the man nearest, that its owner cried out sharply for no violence.

"Violence!" cried the gentleman, in high wrath. "I'll have you pay reckoning for such behaviour. Am I a hare to be chased by hounds like you?"

The other troopers coming up at this moment, he turned on their leader, and demanded, haughtily, now that they had succeeded in overtaking him, what was their object in such a liberty.

Dear heart! I well-nigh dropped with fear when I saw that he who rode forward to be their spokesman was none other than Giles Harrison.

One glance he gave in the stranger's face, and then his lips twitched with an ill-conditioned laugh.

"'Tis a mistake, sir," he said, in his insolent fashion, "and much pardon do I ask for any inconvenience I have caused thee. Misinformed was I by dolts and idiots, and thus led to incontinently follow thee. Seeing, however, that none ride in these days without credentials from the Parliament, I must trouble you to satisfy me on that score."

"Satisfy *you!*" thundered the stranger. "Is a gentleman to be chased like this by any low-born caitiff who chooses to call himself soldier? If these are the manners of your boasted new army, the sooner the King comes to his rights again the better for the nation." And his fingers flew to his pistol.

But as quickly each trooper sprang from his horse and ringed him round, their short muskets charged and waiting.

With an impatient exclamation, the gentleman regarded them wrathfully, and turned to where their leader stood watching him, an amused smile on his face.

"Sir," said Giles Harrison, "we soldiers of the new army carry not our pedigree sheets with us like prize cattle, yet we shall suffice.'

And his teeth gleamed white through his smile.

I saw an angry light flash from the stranger's eyes, but, evidently realising that resistance was useless, he drew a paper from his pouch, and, with haughty contempt, passed it to Giles Harrison.

"There," cried he, "read, if thou hast the wit!"

Watching, I saw Giles Harrison start as he perused it, and a sudden pallor overspread his face. The next moment, bowing low, he returned the paper to the stranger.

"In truth, sir," he said, with an effort to recover his usual composure, "thou hast reason for thine anger, yet so honourable and trusted a friend of His Excellency as Sir Harry Burgoin is known to be, will, I trust, excuse my misplaced ardour."

Then turning without more ado, he gave the word for his men to mount, and away he went the way he had come, his dragooners thundering behind him.

As I watched him disappear over the hill, I could scarce contain my thankfulness. For in truth it was too fine a cozening of this crafty Roundhead. Passing ordinary chance was it that had made him miss me by so short a time, and mistake for myself the man who still stood, fretting and chafing at his grievance, just outside the wood.

So thinking was I in fine content, when what does my mare but whinny out, betraying me at the very moment of triumph. I saw the stranger start, and, with his horse's bridle over his arm, walk quickly towards the wood.

Without a second's delay I hurried my mare through the trees, and, seeking the open some yards down, mounted her and with all speed went off down the hill.

I heard the stranger hallo to me from behind, but I heeded him not, for though I tried to persuade myself that 'twas none of his business to hinder me, yet was my heart full of misgivings, remembering his challenge of me at the inn window.

I soon found out that following me he was, business or no business, and, setting spurs to my mare, I went off at full gallop, seeking my mind as I rode for reason for his interference, but the more I thought the more puzzled was I.

Coming at length to the conclusion that it was but another case of mistaken identity, and realising that to be followed thus might eventually lead to betrayal of my mission, I slackened speed and courted his overtaking me.

But on this he too drew rein, and so I dropped

to a walk and in trepidation waited for his next move.

Coming up to within a yard or two of me, he walked his horse thus for a few moments whilst my hair rose on my head with fear, as I thought it like now that a bullet through my back would be his first question. But for all that I had neither courage nor will to turn and face him, so much had his cat-like creepings up behind appalled me.

The second after he went past me at a quick canter, and no small relief was I feeling, when he as suddenly turned and rode straight towards me.

Though there was no doubt now of his intent, I, pulling my mare to a standstill, sat, as if turned to stone, awaiting him.

"LOOK, THEN, TO THY DEFENCE."

CHAPTER XI.

THE CREST OF THE ANTELOPE.

TO my horse's head he rode, and looked me full in the face.

"Sir," he cried, "such lone voyagers should not disdain comradeship." Then, before I could find time or wit to reply, he added as he scanned me crown to toe, "If I mistake not, gentle sir, you claim close relationship with one Barabbas."

"Barabbas?" I stammered in wonderment.

"Why, yes," he answered, a queer look in his eyes, "for was he not a robber?"

My mind in a whirl of amazement and gathering fear, I could only stare at him speechless.

"At the same time," he added, "allow me to offer my condolence for the wound thou hast so lately received," and here his lips twitched and a break came into his stern voice. "A wound," he said, recovering himself, "that has so foully stained and torn thy doublet, but which I perceive with content hath left thee still in the possession of perfect health."

My eyes, staring into his face, fell at his words to my doublet, which, being too large, bagged up to my sight, and here my gaze hung, a cry of horror breaking from my lips. For now, for the first time, did I notice that the left side was marred by a jagged cut, while all round it was a dark stain—alas—alas! stiff was it to my cold fingers, that shudderingly touched it.

"Well?" cried he, and I lifted my eyes and, meeting his stern gaze,

"Sir!" I faltered, "I know not," and shivered as I spoke.

A puzzled look crossed his face as he regarded me.

"Know not!" cried he. "Boy that thou art, must know that such a wound to the coat does not leave unscathed the heart beneath it. Come, thou wilt at least agree," he added, "that either thy coat was marred when on another's back, or else 'tis another's coat thou wearest."

That there were meaning and threatening in his words I knew, yet, for the sake of my mission, I made an attempt to evade his question.

"Sir," I replied, "the times are not so propitious to gentlemen that one brother can disdain the other's attire—even if so cruelly disfigured."

"Brother!" he shouted, his eyes quite gleaming with fury. "Now do I know thee to be a villain! Pluck off thy hat, sir, unless thou wouldst crave my sword to aid thee, and tell me, if thou canst, what crest thou carriest there with such bold effrontery."

Stern and menacing as was this command I made no effort to obey it, for my glance was fixed on his own beaver, where, set without favour truly, but gleaming bright, I saw the same silver crest of antelope that adorned the hat I was wearing.

Indeed, indeed, I was undone. For what explanation could I give that would not betray my secret? He was watching my face with eyes that never faltered, and no doubt read there the terror that overspread it.

"Speak out, young sir," cried he less harshly. "In truth, by thy looks and tender years, it would appear to me that thou mayst be more victim than sinner. Come, tell me," he added, persuasively, though with most mournful accent, "how camest thou by these garments of my young brother, Hugh Burgoin, who left our home, carrying with him important information to General Cromwell a fortnight ago, and who now, I feel sure, has been most foully murdered?"

With a cry of horror, I covered my face with my hands.

The lone house at Torrington, the fellow on the stairs, who at sight of me had cried for mercy; I was finding meaning to these mysteries.

"Come," said the man at my side, "thy answer."

I raised my head and looked at him, and then towards Langtree. Alas! every moment of delay might see the Cavalier away, I knew not whither.

"Sir," I said impulsively, "I could tell thee much," and here I stopped, checked by caution.

"Why," cried he, "what child's play is this? I say thou *shalt* tell me all, and that right speedily," and he touched his sword meaningly. "Now, how camest thou by these clothes?" said he.

"'Tis true I stole the gauds," I answered, and blushed for shame at the avowal. "But," added I, lifting my head in sudden resolve, and speaking with no less decision than his own, "if thou dost kill me for it, no word more will I utter concerning how or when, unless thou wilt permit me to ride on unhindered as far as 'Langtree Inn,' and there execute an urgent matter I have on hand. This being so, I do swear on mine honour I will return to thee without delay, and unfold to thee all I know of this sorrowful business."

"So this is your answer?" he cried, in a rage. "Look, then, to thy defence; for, boy that thou art, I owe so much to my brother's memory not thus to let hope of revenge slip through my fingers. But," cried he suddenly with amaze, glancing from me to my saddle, "you carry no weapon! What manner of rogue, then, art thou?"

"An honest one enough, sir," I replied, proudly, "as I will prove to thee, if thou wilt but grant my request, and that right speedily, too, for on my going thither at once, I set more store than on life itself!"

Knitting his brows, he searched my face with a puzzled look.

"Thy mien would almost tempt me to trust thee," he said, after hesitation. "Nevertheless, 'tis against all discretion to accede to such a request, but thus far will I accommodate thee—*together* we will ride to Langtree."

"But, sir," I cried, interrupting him, "'tis not possible that one accompanies me on the errand I take."

At my words an incredulous smile for a second chased the gloom from his eyes.

"So," said he, "'tis that, you young rascal—a lady, forsooth, and thou with thy chin yet as smooth as a girl's. Faith! when thou art my age, thou wilt esteem life at a greater value than thus keeping a rendezvous with thy lady-love."

"Sir," I implored impatiently, "time passes while we talk."

"Plague take thy audacity!" he cried frowning, "but think not by such a show to undermine my resolution. By all that is holy do I swear that thou shalt not now give me the slip. A just Heaven has favoured me, by strange method, to thus find you where I sought thee not. Together, then, boy, we go, or for my brother's sake I do compel thee to accompany me, by use of violence, from which, seeing thy youth and unarmed state, my manhood recoils."

Alas! I had fallen into a trap, which had but one exit, and that ill-suited to my liking. "Sir," I said earnestly, after a moment's thought, "if we go thus together, thou wilt not strive to discover my undertaking?"

"Nay," he replied, a little smile puckering the corners of his stern mouth. "Thou canst trust me so far. Have I not been a lad myself? But

I FELT A SHARP PAIN THROUGH MY RIGHT ARM

not, thank Heaven, with such a face as thine, or the maids would have pestered me into ending my bachelor days long ago.'

Alas, alas! How deceit was enveloping me! My heart smote me that I must thus cheat him, but in truth there was no other way open to me.

"Well, then," I said with a sigh, "it's a bargain, and we help one another, and I caught up my reins

"Let it be so," he answered, "but fair play, my pretty clothes-stealer! For although thou hast beguiled me into half belief of thee, yet do I swear that, if thou dost strive to elude or escape me, I will shoot thee before thou canst make off to do further mischief

"I shall give thee no opportunity to test thy skill as a marksman," I replied, haughtily enough, as we rode slowly forward, for the term "pretty clothes-stealer" was a hard morsel to swallow, and the more so since I could not honestly resent its application.

We rode down the hill in silence. Once I stole a glance at my companion, who seemed wrapped in profound thought, but even as I gazed did I see his hand wander

to his belt, into which, unobserved by me, he had thrust one of the pistols from his holsters.

I knew then how little he trusted me, and the thought angered me. Tossing my head with contempt at his suspicion, I vowed I would teach him to know that I esteemed honour with no less nicety than himself.

Little desire had I for converse, but when we came to the base of the hill, and the road lay before us, I turned to my companion and said that I thought it right to inform him I travelled without permit of any kind, and therefore, as my business could not brook delay, I should prefer to journey by the open country, that lay before us, rather than court the greater danger the road held for one so unprovided with passport.

He darted a look of suspicion at me and mused a moment.

"Nay," said he, "I think I can promise thee safety from such detention. Should we be questioned, thy masquerade will readily help me to pass thee with my own credentials. So we will keep to the road, young sir."

If he expected me to look crestfallen he was disappointed, for I answered with haughty indifference, "As you will," and again silence fell upon us.

As we rode on, though, my thoughts flew as only a maid's will. Not an inch of the country around did mine eyes miss, for though I deemed it unlikely the Cavalier had not before then reached Langtree, yet accident might find him no further on his journey than were we.

Before I could credit it we had gained the top of the hill, and there at a corner, where three roads met, stood an inn. In front of it grew a spreading beech tree, and upon the swinging signboard a green dragon was painted with rough boldness. It was in truth the place I sought, and, my heart beating wildly, I rode quickly forward.

As for my companion, though he kept closely at my side, I noted that he glanced around him suspiciously, and that he now held his pistol in his hand, though partially concealed beneath the folds of his riding cape, no doubt suspecting I was leading him into some ambush with evil intent.

Elated and pleased as I was to have thus arrived at my destination, I was still full of apprehension, being not without fear of finding here some soldiers of the Parliament. But all looked quiet, and, indeed, even deserted, as we drew rein at the inn's entrance.

Stooping from my horse I tapped upon the door with my whip, then waited in much suspense. But no one came, and not a sound could be heard outside or within.

Looking up at me sharply, my companion bade me knock again, which I did, this time with increased force. But it not suiting my mare's high spirit to be thus kept dallying, she danced around with me in fine style, pawing the ground, and whinnying with pretty wilfulness.

I had succeeded in calming her somewhat, and was patting her head, when across the field behind the inn I saw a man running.

His back was towards me, yet did I know him instantly. It was the Cavalier!

Dear heart! Was he again to escape me? Not a moment did I wait. With a touch of the whip to my only too willing steed, and away down the hill, past the church, and over the hedge to the right and into the open went I, like the wind.

I had just gained the top of the knoll, behind which the Cavalier had disappeared, when the report of a pistol startled me, and singing through the feathers of my hat flew a bullet.

Alack! in my excitement I had forgot my companion, and the good faith I had broken.

A second later, I had overtaken the Cavalier, but at that moment another shot rang out. I felt a sharp pain run through my right arm, and with a cry fell forward to my horse's head, while the ground seemed to reel before me, and the morning light to fade to blackest night.

Through it all I heard my companion gallop up behind. I expected death at his hand, and felt I deserved it, but instead with a cry of surprise he rode past me to the Cavalier.

"Brian!" he cried, in most joyful recognition. and "Harry!" said the other, as they clasped hands.

This much I heard ere, with a moan, I sank into what seemed a gulf of darkness.

(To be continued.)

Profondo Basso's Band

by Alf. B. Cooper.

pictures by Harry Rountree.

Being the Tale of a Rural Race

PROFONDO BASSO had a Band, or, if
that statement's wrong,
Let's say Profondo "ruled the roost" and
wielded the batôn;
Yes, wielded it to such a tune that, for some
miles around,
At galas, sports, and flower-shows this famous
Band was found.

'Twas not composed of drums and fifes, nor yet of blatant brass,
But mixed judiciously with "strings" to give it "tone" and "class."
The first and second violins thought they were the *élite*,
The ophicleide thought otherwise—his words we won't repeat.

But when the man who beat the drum once got into his stride,
He took the bun for bumptiousness in all the country side,
And trombone, on the outside right, his slide shot out and in,
And strove to drown the clarinettes and beat the drum for din.

Oh, when Profondo led his men it was the richest treat
To see the swift gyrations of his pet staccato beat;
His hands and arms, his head and legs, seemed lightly hung on wire,
And, when he'd done, the band and he would sit down and perspire.

Now Hoppington-cum-Quaffingham is noted for its ale,
And there an episode occurred which constitutes my tale;
For when its yearly gala came the Band, of course, was there,
And, in the intervals of sport, discoursed its music rare.

Some lay the blame upon the "lunch," and some
upon the sun,

Whilst others vow it was a wag who said they
couldn't run;
But all the people yelled with glee and said it
would be grand
To hold a "sprinting handicap" for members of
the Band.

Profondo, who was temperate, protested all in
vain,
And said they must be suffering "vrom vatare
on der prain";
For every man who entered for this novel
handicap
Must carry his own instrument and race for half
a lap!

They placed the piccolo at scratch, the clarin-
ettes likewise,
But cornets got a foot or two because of extra
size;
They gave big drum some fifty yards, and—
seeing he was fat—
The man who played the 'cello had ten yards
tacked on to that.

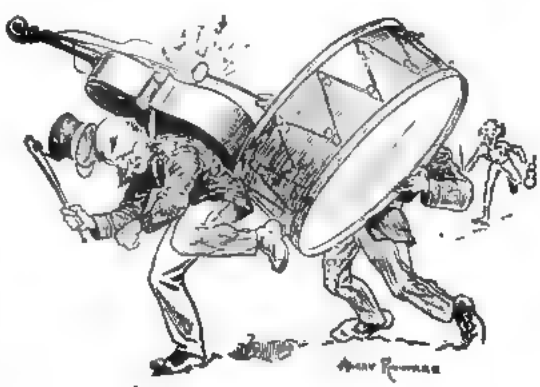
The trombone and the tenor-horn stood fifteen
yards from scratch,
Euphonium and ophicleide were such another
match;
So these were given twenty, and bass-trumpet
twenty-four,
Although the latter grumbled that he ought to
have much more.

The violins, as they were light, got precious
little grace,
And the youth who played the triangle was
noted for his pace;
So these, about three yards from scratch, were
ranged all in a row,
And every man but Basso was at length prepared
to "go."

The pistol cracks, and now they're off!—the
trombone makes the pace,
But piccolo gets off the mark as though he'll
win the race;
The 'cello and the big bass drum are clearly
losing ground,
Whilst first and second violins are gaining every
bound.

But as they draw together, drum and 'cello
neck and neck,
The latter, putting on a spurt, becomes a total
wreck;
For, in his haste to head the drum, he o'er his
fiddle slips,
And, big drum tumbling over him, they smash
it into chips.

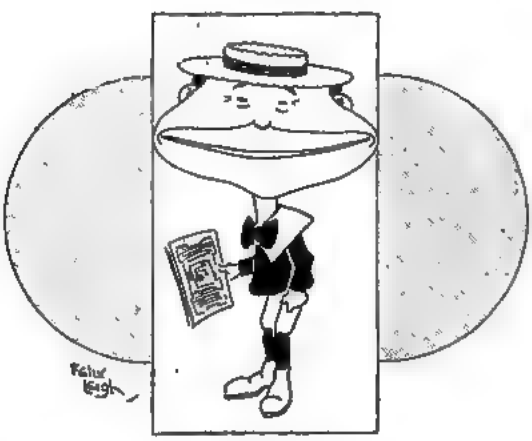
But this is but the prelude for disasters worse to
come,
For trombone, in a hurry, takes a header
through the drum;
And piccolo, full fifteen stone, sits on the
ophicleide,
And cornet cracks two violins—his cranium
beside.



'Twas feared at first that trombone would most certainly succumb,
For seven people lay on him, and he inside the drum!
But when Profondo, hurrying up, used his staccato "beat,"
They howled for mercy lustily, and quickly found their feet.

But lo! of all the instruments bestrewn upon the ground,
The triangle alone emerged, in *tune*, and safe and sound,
And as Profondo Basso left the field, he roundly swore
To start "von Pand of Hope" at once, and lead his men no more.

The triangle alone emerged, in tune, and safe and sound.



SPACE NEEDED SIDEWAYS.

"I wonder what I'm to do! If I smile any wider over these irresistibly comic drawings in THE CAPTAIN I shall break right out of the picture, you know!"

DRYSDALE—NATURALIST.

By Fred. Swainson, *Author of "Acton's Feud," etc.*

Illustrated by T. M. R. Whitwell.

It was an axiom at St. Elizabeth's that the oddest fellow there was Jack Drysdale, of Bultitude's House. He had that reputation as a kid, it clung to him when he became a monitor, and even when he left, in a blaze of glory, to go to Oxford, the general opinion was that it would be a long time before Eliza's saw again such an odd genius as he.

Drysdale was no athlete, simply because he hadn't time for cricket or footer, and although Miller, Bultitude's captain, used to growl at him endlessly to turn out and do something for his house, Drysdale would open his eyes and laboriously explain that he couldn't "collect" and kick a football at the same time.

Drysdale must have been Natural History mad from the day he was born. It was a fable that when he came first to Eliza's, raw and gawky, he caught a young yellowhammer between the station and the school, and interviewed Bultitude with the bird squeaking in his pocket, and it is a matter of fact that when he came down the speech-room steps for the last time, he put down his huge morocco, gilt-edged drawing prize on the dusty stones to pill-box a green beetle. Drysdale never swerved to the right or left in his hobby. Winter or summer he was on the look-out for specimens.

As a kid he fielded for the seniors—when he could not coax or bribe some other junior to take his share of fag—with pockets bulging with pickle-bottles, ready for prospective captures, while a few years later, if you had seen a fellow rushing madly along the streets a minute or so before the last tinkle of the lock-up bell, with his straw in strands flapping about his ears, his faded blazer ripped up and across, his trousers muddied and wet up to the knees, clutching a disreputable landing-net, or holding something dead—and whiffy—or alive and struggling, in his huge pockets, you had seen Drysdale.

His den was a museum. Egg cabinets, butterfly cases, black, green, and purple beetles, bottles filled with dead snakes, a litter of pins, pill-boxes, nets, blow-pipes, chloroform bottles, alum, skins drying on boards, knives, a huge paint-box, canvases, and jars filled the room to bursting point, and over all hung the compounded odour of varnish, oil, camphor, chloroform, and carbolic.

No fellow in Eliza's could handle animals like Drysdale. In his hands a rabbit with a broken leg, a spitting, vixenish cat mauled by a dog, a pigeon with croup, lay quiet and docile. Between animals and himself there seemed to exist a mysterious sympathy; he could stroke them, feed them, doctor them in a sure and confident way peculiarly his own. Juniors would hang round his den for hours to peep at the treasures within, and Drysdale's word was law on moths and eggs; there was no appeal beyond his decision.

In the school, Drysdale was merely average, but in one line he had a gift which enabled him to leave every other Elizabethan hopelessly behind. He drew like an angel, and coloured as marvellously. Hartington, the art master, had never pretended to teach Drysdale anything. What took the average fellow years to acquire Drysdale knew without teaching. He had painted startling copies of Swan's panthers, Nettleship's boars, and Riviere's dogs and bears, and they hung alongside drying skins on his wall. There was a water-colour of a kingfisher which was simply one blaze of glory, and beneath Drysdale's great treasure—a Purple Emperor—he had painted a copy on the white cardboard, and it seemed one gorgeous butterfly chasing another. About Drysdale's sanity the average blockhead had his doubts, but you could only gasp in wonder and delight before his painting. Drysdale was tall and good-looking, but, as Gale poetically said, "he clothed his beauty in rags." You could hardly have told Drysdale from a tramp until he spoke. Drysdale had no chums, because Elizabethans could not quite make up their minds about him, and until he gave Eliza's that great leg-up at Bisley he was looked upon pretty much as you would look upon a six-legged chicken. How he came to be such a great shot at seventeen years is a rather roundabout story.

Drysdale's people lived in Burmah, and the naturalist owed some sort of allegiance to the

family solicitor, who paid his bills for him, and advised him as to his holidays. But Drysdale generally had his plans mapped out for a month or so ahead, and when he proposed spending his Easter month at Chernside, a little Westmorland village, the solicitor wondered, but agreed. "Brighton should have had my vote, if I'd been Jack, but then, Jack's not an ordinary fellow."

Drysdale had had Chernside in his head a long time, and when he finally installed himself and his impedimenta in a little cottage tucked snugly in the flanks of the mountain side, he thought himself in Elysium. There were woods of birch and beech and larch—the larch already green—stretching up the mountain side, and above them the brown heather rolled over the mountain tops, and away for miles beyond, covering the silent valleys among the hills with its brown carpet. Up there you can still see the raven circling round the heavens, miles high, or hear his harsh croak when he is out of sight. The hen-harrier still hawks swiftly over the heather, where the red grouse fights furiously in the early morning. The sandpipers, the snipe, the teal, the wild duck fly across the still tarns, their legs dangling as they go, and you may hear, if you know the sound, the pipe of the rare dottrel or the whoop of the curlew. This was a new world for Drysdale. There are no hen-harriers, nor ravens, nor dottrel anywhere near Eliza's. A couple of miles from his cottage, along the white country road, were the yellow sands running out to the horizon, their vast spread tenantless, except for an occasional cockle-fisher miles out, or a grey crowd of gulls barking over some shallow pool forgotten by the outgoing tide. A solid wall of limestone ran out into the yellow sand, to bar the rush of the rising tide, and in the holes and crannies countless jackdaws nested, their mates for ever wheeling round the windy cliff, and dodging the sweeping, scythe-like rush of the little brown kestrels, who claimed the wind-swept ledges. Then, below the road, were peat mosses, stretching for miles, a very paradise for moor-fowl, over whose nests in the reeds the silver birches stood sentinels, and there were old grey barns——but why describe? It was altogether lovely. Drysdale threw open his tiny window, and listened to the cries of the birds in the marsh below, the hooting of the owls in the ivied barn, and the whooping of the curlew as it flew overhead in the dark for the moorlands above. Drysdale had seen a dozen birds he had not seen before, and he had heard the calls in bird language he did not know, and when he shut the window he dreamed of holding handfuls of brown mottled eggs.

Next morning he slipped into the shadow of the green wood, rejoicing. Five minutes afterwards a man lounged lazily across his path—a man who could look down at him, even, from a height, who carried an ash-plant under his arm, and whose retriever sniffed suspiciously about Drysdale's calves.

"Where are you going?" he said, without unnecessary politeness.

"Nowhere in particular," said Drysdale easily.

"Well, that's

HE FOUND ARLINGTON'S NOTICE BOARDS THICK AS CHESTNUTS IN OCTOBER.

the way you've come, young fellow. Hook it!"

"Not by a long chalk," said Drysdale angrily.

"We're down on poachers hereabouts, so hook it back."

"I'm no poacher, and besides——"

"What are you after then?"

"Eggs," said Drysdale, without any beating about the bush.

"Thought so," said the gamekeeper grimly. "You stick to the road hedges, and don't come tramping through here. See the notice?"

"No."

"It's against Colonel Arlington's orders, young man, but I guess, being a stranger, you didn't know. All the land you can see from here is his, and it's strictly preserved. You know now."

"The moors above?"

"And miles beyond them."

"The marsh below?"

"Yes."

"The cliff?"

"No, you're welcome to the jacks and hawks."

"Well, tell me what isn't his," said Drysdale bitterly.

"An odd farm or two and the cliff road."

Drysdale heard this with a sinking heart. He was on the edge of a bird paradise—the wood pigeons were crooning in the larches around him, and he heard a jay scolding in the thicket fifty yards away even as he spoke—that he could not enter. He wished Velveteens good morning, and, turning on his heel, went dismally back. Then he found Arlington's notice boards thick as chestnuts in October, and they weighed like a nightmare on Drysdale's spirits. He stood the strain of being without the paradise for one day, and then he determined to take the risk—board or no board, gamekeeper or no gamekeeper. It was a little sooty-black bird, with a white throat, flying straight as an arrow, skimming the bubbling water of a little trouting stream, that screwed Drysdale's desires up to the trespassing point.

"That's a water-ousel," said he, "and for a sov. its nest is under the first bridge up stream. Hang Arlington!" Drysdale was over the wall in a twinkling, and moving quietly up stream. Now Drysdale, although he verged on 6ft., could tread almost as softly as a cat, and as he slipped through the hazel covers, and from tree to tree, he made less noise than a rabbit makes in the undergrowth, and the whimpling stream, creaming over the stones, hid that. In ten minutes he had forgotten that he was a trespasser, "the utmost rigour of the law," and Velveteens, for just where the stream broke out of the larch wood a little low grey bridge straddled across it, and, as his shadow fell upon the dark waters, an ousel whirled out of the gloom down stream.

"Mrs. Dipper's at home, evidently," said Drysdale, as he dropped down into thigh-deep cold water, and crawled under the bridge. He took half an hour to find the nest, a ball of green moss as big as a football, cunningly hidden in the stonework, and when he waded out into daylight two snow-white eggs lay snugly in his pocket. "That's good hunting," said Drysdale. "Whew!"

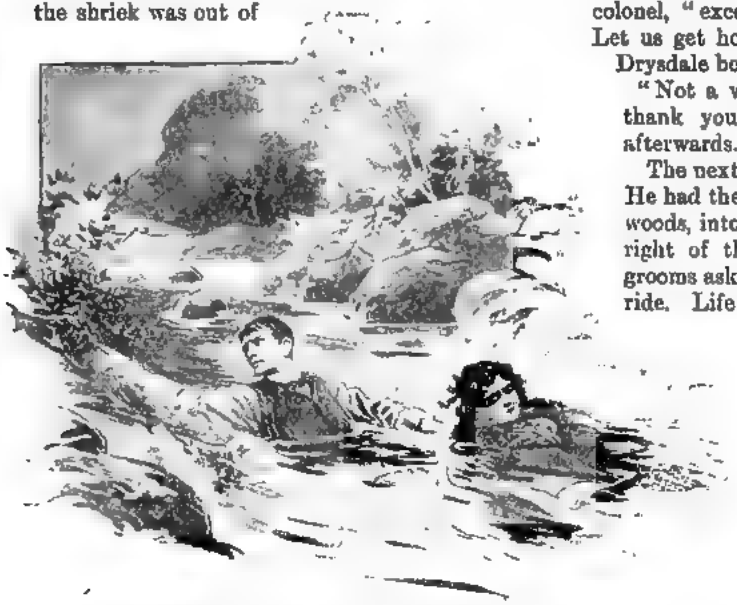
Drysdale hastily pulled back into the gloom of the bridge, for thirty yards below him a girl was casting a line, artistically, over a deep black pool, and sixty yards below her a gentleman, his face framed in grey whiskers, a soldier every inch of him, was reeling up a trout. He held it up to the girl, and she smiled pleasantly as he dropped it into the creel. "First kill for you to-day, father," Drysdale heard her call.

"Arlington père and Arlingtonne fille," grumbled Drysdale. "I'm—ahem!—treed, and it's beastly cold. I wish they'd move off." Drysdale could not get out by the other end of the bridge. There was a sheep guard closing the mouth, and he could not force it back, so he squatted on a brown boulder, his knees up to his chin, and prayed for deliverance. The ousel came back and shot home to her nest, the fisherman moved slowly down stream yard by yard, but the girl flogged that black pool untiringly, and every now and then Drysdale saw the gleaming sides of a trout as it was lifted, sans ceremony, bodily out of the water. "There's a girl who can drop a fly, anyhow," he murmured, admiringly. "That makes four. All the same, dear, do go."

Drysdale's artistic eye told him that the girl made a very pretty picture as she stood, firm and square, under the shadow of the dripping rocks, skilfully covering every inch accessible to her of the water below, and his knowledge of the art made him respect her skill. The girl finally moved away, and Drysdale got off his uneasy perch, prepared to make a hurried departure. As he came to the mouth of the bridge, he found that the fisher had merely moved to the foot of the pool, and was dropping her fly below where she had formerly stood. This manœuvre sent Drysdale hastily back, for the girl was now full face to him. She had sprung from the bank upon a dripping boulder, that her rod might have freer play. Behind her the waters took a leap, breaking into sheets of foam as they crashed on the black boulders below, and the stream raced past her perch like a mill-race. At her second cast she struck a fish, and Drysdale heard the singing of her reel as she drew her captive triumphantly

across the pool. And then Drysdale saw her slither on the wet boulder, he heard a piercing shriek, and the next moment there was no sound but the roar of the waters, and no human being to be seen but a grey-coated gentleman running for dear life up stream.

Drysdale was out of the bridge and scrambling upon the bank before the shriek was out of his ears. He ran like a deer for the pool, stripping off his coat as he ran. In the centre of the swirling waters a girl fought desperately against the racing stream, and Drysdale could see that she could not swim, though her clothes buoyed her up. Without a thought of the risk he ran, he jumped into the black waters, and struck out manfully, as the force of current began to draw the girl towards the leap. He clutched her by the neck of the dress, but, despite his utmost strength, to fight against the racing water was beyond him. Slowly, but surely, they would be drawn over. The black rocks held the waters like a basin, and their smooth sides afforded not a hand-hold; the pair bobbed alongside their prison walls like peas in a bowl. The girl had ceased to struggle, and Drysdale had given up hope when, a dozen yards from the leap, a branch swished him in the face. His hand went up, and with a feverish grasp he held it, and their course was stayed. Drysdale looked up, and saw that a slender mountain ash, growing among the rocks, had dropped a branch for their safety. He prayed that it would hold. A moment afterwards a white face peered down from above them, and Arlington scrambled down the rocks. With his toes dug firmly into the roots of the ash, he leaned over and grasped his daughter's hand, and the girl was hauled bodily out of the deadly waters. Drysdale followed, and then three white-faced people stared at each other as in a dream.



DRYSDALE LOOKED UP, AND SAW THAT A SLENDER MOUNTAIN ASH HAD DROPPED A BRANCH FOR THEIR SAFETY.

"I don't understand anything, sir," said the colonel, "except that you've saved Hilda's life. Let us get home at once."

Drysdale began to explain.

"Not a word, sir, now. I haven't words to thank you, but we'll have the explanations afterwards."

The next day Drysdale entered into Elysium. He had the "open sesame" into all those quiet woods, into the brown moorlands; he had the right of the brown trouting stream, and the grooms asked him in the morning if he would ride. Life was perfect, and all because he had followed a water-ousel home. Henceforth between their houses there should be peace. There was the colonel's library, too, Richard Jefferies, Waterton, Edwards, Dixon, books with Bewicke's illustrations, books with Millais' plates, and many more good sorts. Drysdale had never had an opportunity before of studying water birds, and all day long he was pounding over the moors or squashing through the marshes, gathering in a harvest of olive, brown-spotted, blood-blotched eggs. Among the beetling crags of Hawse Fell he tracked a pair of ravens to their ledge, and all one glorious morning he and Velveteens, his very good friend, spent their time in securing the eggs. Velveteens said that to hold Drysdale at the end of a rope while he swung sheer for half an hour was not easy work. There was a strain on his mind as well as on the rope. But Drysdale had no fear. He raided the cliff where the kestrels built—easy work after the raven performance—and was rewarded with two blood-coloured eggs. He got a carrion crow's green treasure from a giant Scotch fir, and knew of a hill fox's lair among the heather-hidden rocks.

Hilda went with him once or twice, but Drysdale did not approve of girls when he was on an expedition. They tired too soon. Hilda, of course, was quite the nicest girl he had ever known, but she did not appreciate a heron's egg more than a hedge-sparrow's, and that is not the proper way to look at eggs. But Hilda could fill her creel with trout under two hours, and

Drysdale might get a quarter of her poundage in the same time, and that was the kind of girl anyone could respect. Hilda dropped her fly into a little eddying swirl, and the next moment there was a gleam in the dark waters as a trout turned to suck in his death. "It's a knack, Jack, which you'll get one day, and then never lose until you die."

"I wish there were happy hunting grounds then," said Jack.

The days ran by until there was but a week left of Drysdale's holiday. "When I get down to St. Eliza's, there'll be the nightingales and blackcaps singing. The south is better for small birds than here. I'm awfully sorry, though, that it's coming to an end. By the way, Hilda, you haven't shown me that picture you said you were busy with."

"Oh! it's finished now."

Drysdale whistled when he saw the canvas. There was a little brown kestrel striking at a thrush a few feet above the yellow sands. The hawk, the thrush, and the sands—that was all; but the sands stretched away into the far distance, just as they ran out from the cliff, and the birds were beautifully painted.

"Jove, Hilda! You *can* paint," said Drysdale, admiringly.

The girl blushed with pleasure.

"They say I can, but I wanted to know what you thought. Then you really think it good?"

"You paint splendidly—there's no doubt about *that*."

The girl caught the slightest hesitancy in Drysdale's voice.

"Now, Jack, say what it is that's wrong. You've found something?"

Drysdale looked carefully at the picture for five minutes.

"You've painted it splendidly, Hilda, but that piccy's all wrong all the same. I couldn't tell you half a lie. Have I your leave to speak?"

"Yes," said the girl, wondering in her own mind how Drysdale could speak as one in authority.

Between sixteen years in a girl and seventeen in a boy there is no great gulf fixed, but Drysdale was speaking here as to a little child.

"It's only the drawing that's wrong. Kestrels don't stoop like that—they couldn't, their bones wouldn't let them. That wing is far too high, the angle isn't right. You've feathered his legs too low, and the joints in his left claw are wrong. You haven't quite got the colour on his throat, and his tail is too short. I don't like the eyes, either."

Hilda bit her lip. "And the thrush?"

"He's nearly right. You know him better, but he wouldn't have a drop of blood on his breast already, would he? Besides, Hilda, a thrush is pretty nearly as big as a kestrel. I don't think he'd tackle a full-grown one. Young one he might, and, anyhow, a kestrel catches with his claws; he doesn't use his beak until he's eating—I know."

"The sands?"

"They're magnificent. Jove, Hilda, you can paint! What's the name?"

"'*Murder*.'"

"That's wrong—horribly wrong. That's not murder. It's '*Life*.' Call it '*Life*.' See, I'll show you his wings."

Drysdale sketched for the astonished girl a dozen pair of wings, and at the end of half an hour she gasped:—

"Why, you're a painter, Jack."

"I shall be one day, Hilda. You'll start another to-morrow, and we'll have a chaffinch instead of a thrush; and we'll have the kestrel right to a feather. A week's hard work, and there'll be a real good canvas."

"But that horrid kestrel?"

"I'll see to that."

Next morning Drysdale lay under the shadow of the great sea cliff, a small rifle in his hand. He had slipped into the breech a cartridge of small duck-shot, and his eye scanned anxiously the little brown wind-hovers sailing out from their ledges, and then staying motionless, save for their trembling wings, in mid-air. He was anxious lest he should shoot a paired bird, but at last he thought he had discovered what he was looking for. He rested his rifle on the rock behind which he was crouching, and when finally the bird swept within range he fired. The little kestrel fluttered down forlornly to the sands. "That was murder," said the naturalist, "but Hilda can paint what she sees, and a kestrel she had to have. He isn't torn either."

Under Drysdale's directions—he reproduced for her the pose of a swooping hawk—Hilda commenced her second picture, and, when Drysdale was satisfied that she understood, he left her to the painting. Colonel Arlington strolled with Drysdale on his last night. "Like Eliza's, Jack?"

"Fine place, sir."

"Changed a lot since I was there, I know. How's the corps stepping out now?"

"So-so, sir. We're rather bunchy as we march in column."

"Shooting good?"

"Rotten, sir."

"Why?" asked the old soldier quietly.

"Dunno, sir."

"No hope of the Spencer Cup at Bisley, then?"

"Not by a long chalk. It's all cricket, footer,

and rackets there now, sir. We always cut a sorry figure at Bisley."

"Places like Giggleswick and Blundell's roll you up there, eh?" asked the colonel, sarcastically. "Schools you could smite from Dan to Beersheba at cricket pile on the bulls while you occasionally hit the targets. Why?"

"Don't know, sir."

"You shoot rather well, Jack. You couldn't have murdered that wind-hover for Hilda with that collector's rifle otherwise. Why not take your Lee-Metford seriously?"

Drysdale looked at the colonel quickly, and the old soldier met the glance frankly.

"Are you a cricketer, Jack?"

"No, sir."

"Play footer?"

"No, sir."

"Well, I always think every fellow should do what he can for his school, according to his gifts. I see Glyn's name, and Higgins's, and Bradfield's pretty frequently, and I like it. Why don't you, Jack, take up the shooting, and put a little life into it? I wouldn't ask you if anyone else had it in hand. Get a few fair shots together, Jack, work them, and give the old place a decent position at Bisley. The sergeant can't do it, though he'll show you the way."

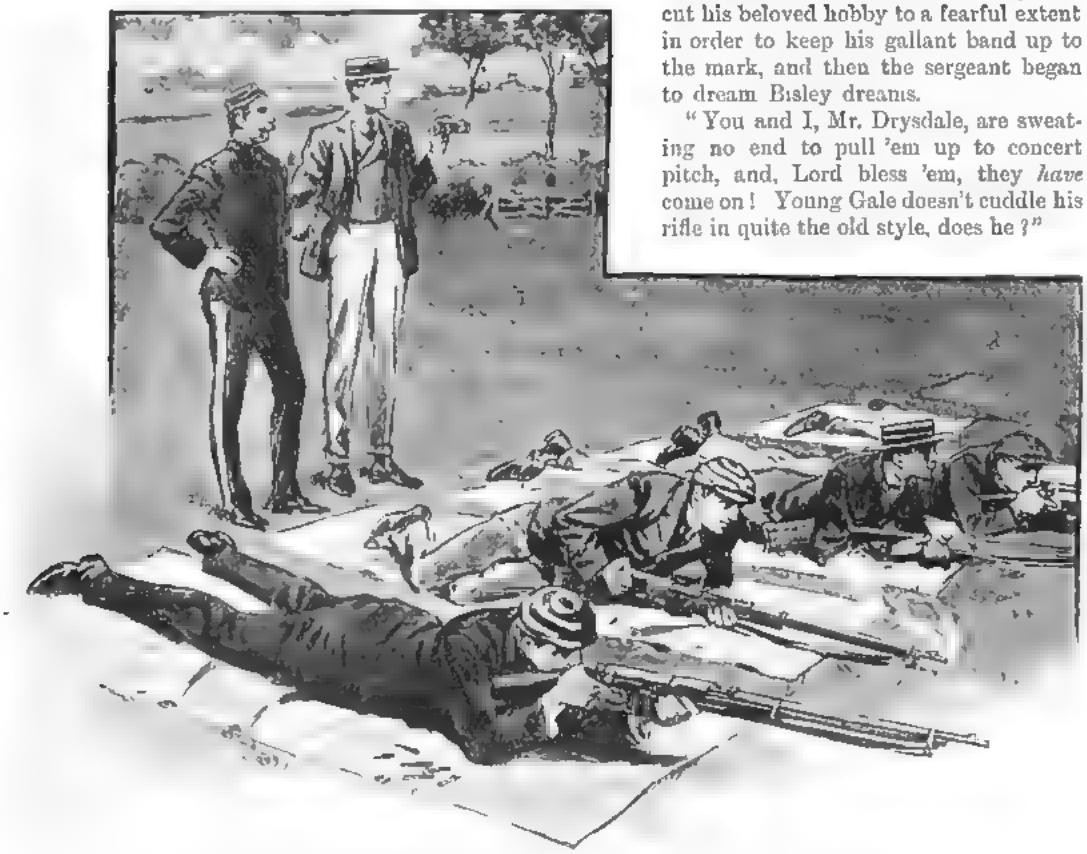
"All right, sir—I'll do my best."

"Thanks, Jack."

* * * * *

One of the surprises of the summer term was the awakening of Drysdale to the fact that he had done precious little for his school or his house in any way. The old colonel's words had opened his eyes considerably. He started his campaign at once, and before a month was out he had, say, a dozen Elizabethans who went to the ranges with considerable enthusiasm. Drysdale cut his beloved hobby to a fearful extent in order to keep his gallant band up to the mark, and then the sergeant began to dream Bisley dreams.

"You and I, Mr. Drysdale, are sweating no end to pull 'em up to concert pitch, and, Lord bless 'em, they *have* come on! Young Gale doesn't cuddle his rifle in quite the old style, does he?"



A DOZEN ELIZABETHANS WENT TO THE RANGES WITH CONSIDERABLE ENTHUSIASM.

Gale said to his cronies, with justifiable pride—he had put on a highest possible at 200yds.:—

"We all thought Drysdale a mere cracked bug-hunter, but he's not that by a long chalk. What that fellow doesn't know about a Lee-Metford isn't worth knowing. Mine threw high and to the left, but Drysdale spotted it second shot, and now I know her little ways. But he! He's got

a hand as steady as a rock, and an eye that sees flies on the targets. Strikes me we'll do something at Bisley. Perhaps——"

Here the fellows threw cartridge shells at Gale in derision.

Two months afterwards, St. Elizabeth's brought back the Spencer Cup to the old school, and in the daily papers there were little diagrams which showed the marvellous shooting of John Drysdale—little pips swarming in the magic innermost circle—and there were paragraphs headed, "Remarkable Performance by a School-boy." Elizabethans developed an exaggerated respect for "the bug-hunter." Then there came a day when Drysdale went to the station gates and waited.

His straw was new, his flannels had a crease down the middle, his blazer blazed, and the biggest swell of St. Elizabeth's School could not have complained of his collar. Wasn't that a jolly afternoon? Hilda Arlington was on his left, and the colonel on his right, when he strolled easily among the crowd on the cricket field, as to the manner born, and felt it was a thing he'd never done before. He pointed out to Hilda the great Higgins, the renowned Glyn, and Carver, and all Elizabethan worthies; and the colonel was introduced to A. Gale, a Bisley celebrity. Then Arlington met another grizzled warrior like himself, and Hilda and Drysdale drifted away together.

"And, Jack, this is my great secret. I sent my picture—our picture—to the Liverpool people, and they accepted it. They're to hang it at their autumn exhibition, and that is only a little less honour than being hung in the Academy itself. And father says we must all go and see it."

"Hilda, I'm awfully glad I fished you out of that pool. More than ever."

"And father is going to give you an invitation for the twelfth for that Bisley shooting."

Drysdale sent his straw skimming in his exultation.

"And now, you come, and I'll show you something."

Within the little garden of a small cottage the pair stood before a cage of starlings. "This is where I keep my live stock," explained Drysdale, "and these are what are left of a family I adopted when the old pair were provided for by the cat."

The starlings, all glittering in their glossy green and purple, pressed against the bars when they heard the voice of Drysdale. He whistled, and, as at a word of command, four birds sat bolt upright on the perch. "Three cheers for Hilda."

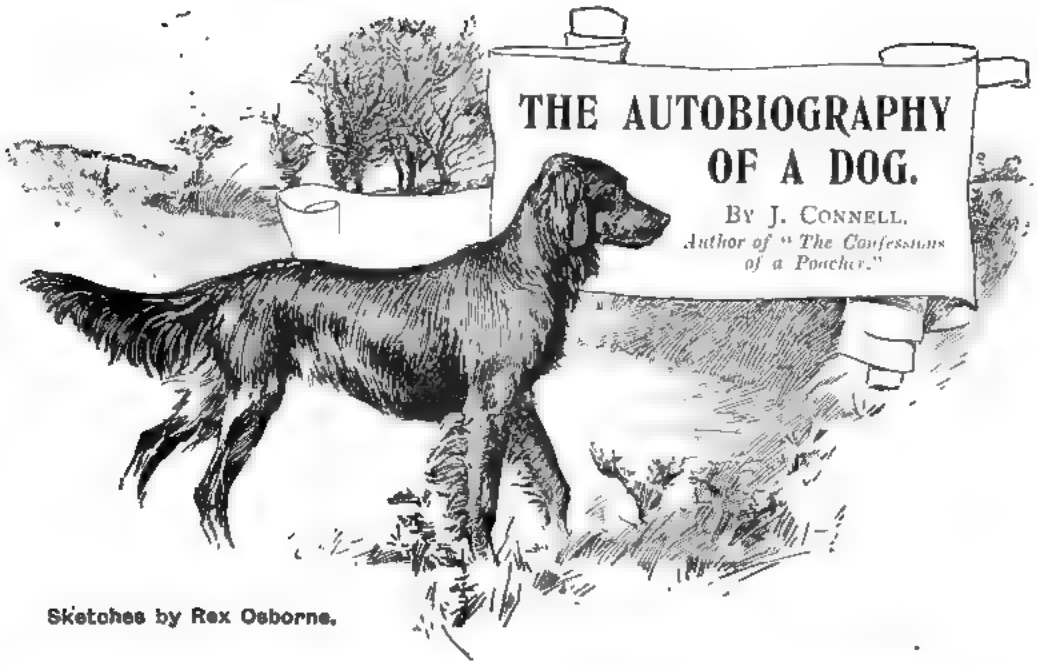
The starlings shrilled forth three piercing "whee—e—e—s," stretching out their necks and beating their breasts exultingly, as a duck does when she stretches herself in the water. Hilda looked at Drysdale with a kind of astonished pleasure.

"I taught 'em that," said Drysdale, proudly, "and promised 'em they should go when you had heard them."

Hilda unfastened the door of the cage, and four starlings went in a little cloud, shrilling with delight.

FREDK. SWAINSON.

AN IDEA FOR OUR SCULPTORS. A CHRISTMAS SUBJECT—"ATHLETE WITH A TURKEY."



THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A DOG.

By J. Connell,
Author of "The Confessions of a Poacher."

Sketches by Rex Osborne.

Finn M'Cool is an Irish setter of excellent pedigree. He becomes the property of Miss Juliet Boxwood, is "broken to the gun" by heart-rending methods which are detailed in Chapter II, and so profits by his tutor's instructions that sporting friends of the Boxwood family declare him to be the best setter they have ever shot over. All goes well for some time, but at length Finn, being disfigured by an accident, is ordered to be destroyed. A sympathetic young keeper, however, gives Finn to his father.

CHAPTER V.

The name of my new master was Garlick. He was nearly sixty years old, and was supposed to be an agricultural labourer. It is only fair to say that men of that class very often find it impossible to procure continuous employment. In the winter, especially, they are frequently idle for weeks and even months at a time. As that is the season in which game is most plentiful, and in which the long nights favour its capture, it is not to be wondered at that many of the out-of-works take to poaching. Many do this at first only when driven to it by hunger, but if they are lucky enough to escape prosecution they generally come to rely on it more and more for a living. This was the case with Garlick. The little work he did was performed more to blindfold people than for any other purpose. Indeed, a long experience of his home enables me to say that he always lived better when he was unemployed than when he was working. It was not uncommon to see a pair of pheasants on his dinner table when he had been a month out of work.

Garlick did not always poach alone. Some methods of poaching, such as netting partridges, necessitate the co-operation of two or more persons. Even when hares or rabbits are caught, by means of dogs, half a dozen of the latter are necessary if a good haul is to be made, and that is more than any one poacher can afford to keep. Garlick himself was always prudent and humane, but some of his associates were desperate characters, who placed almost as little value on the life of a keeper as on that of a hare. I have often witnessed assaults of the most unnecessary and ferocious description on keepers who would have been quite content to allow the poachers to go away quietly with their haul had they been so inclined.

There was one man in particular of this type whom I have reason to remember. His name was Brooks, and, although an inveterate poacher, I verily believe that he took more delight in fighting keepers than in capturing the game. He was such a bully that everybody who took part in our expeditions feared and obeyed him. Soon after I made his acquaintance we were out, one Sunday afternoon, on the fields some four miles away from home. The greyhounds of the party, of which there were several, were chasing and catching hares quite briskly. The sport was, indeed, all that could be desired, when Brooks suddenly ordered

the coursing to cease. For a moment nobody could understand him, but when all the dogs had been put on the lead he pointed to a keeper who had been observing our proceedings from the edge of a wood more than half a mile away, and announced his intention of thrashing him before doing anything else. He immediately set off at a quick pace, and when he reached the unfortunate individual in question we saw the latter pummelled for fully ten minutes, and knocked down half a dozen times. When Brooks had thoroughly satisfied his brutal instincts, he returned to where we stood and ordered coursing to be resumed.

I am never likely to forget the first occasion on which I met this man. I had only recently been cured of my wound, and had not been taken out poaching more than four or five times. On these occasions I had always been accompanied by greyhounds, and my part of the work was to find the game, which I set orthodox fashion, to the great satisfaction of my new master. On the night Brooks joined there were four greyhounds present, and hares came to hand so rapidly that all were soon tired. The bag numbered six when the dogs began to fail, and after that two or three hares escaped. I, however, not having joined in the running, was quite fresh, and continued to find further hares, and set them. I was engaged in one of these sets when Brooks struck me a fearful blow with his stick across the back of the thighs. Had the stick been heavier, it would have broken my bones, but even as it was the blow almost paralysed me. I emitted a howl of terror and pain, and then heard myself addressed by Brooks as follows:—

"Take that, you perisher, and stir your lazy bones instead of standing there like a stuffed dog in a glass case!"

My master interfered, and protected me from further violence, but I gathered from the conversation which followed that even he would be better pleased if I did my share of the running necessary to secure the game. Long-continued habit made a change in the direction indicated difficult, but in my desire to give satisfaction I attempted and accomplished it. Since then, whenever I have found a scent, I have rushed in on my game, and if I have not succeeded in capturing it at once I have taken part in the chasing which followed. Chasing has always been delightful to me, but I cannot help reflecting on the hardship of my fate in relation thereto. When I was young, and full of fire and energy, I had the chasing instinct beaten out of me in the brutal manner described in a former chapter. Later, when my limbs were stiffer and my wind shorter, I had it beaten into me again by Brooks. How strange and inconsistent are the ways of men!

At this stage, I will make an admission which, perhaps, will not raise me in the estimation of my readers. On every occasion on which I went poaching with Brooks, I was wishing and praying that we might encounter either Cankerbrain, or the keeper who had first broken me to the gun; or, better still, both. Brooks would certainly have given them all they deserved, and I would have added a little by way of interest. The encounter, however, never came off.

CHAPTER VI.

IT is now over five years since I came into the possession of Garlick. A full history of my adventures as a poacher's dog would fill a large volume. I have generally had to work hard for my living, and have seen much of the shady side of life. I can confidently affirm that I have assisted in robbing every landowner for ten miles around my home. I have seen other dogs, generally greyhounds, come and go, whilst I have outstayed them all.

During the last couple of years I have not been able to run fast enough to catch anything, and so am now used by my owner solely to assist him in catching hares by means of what he calls the "parsley trap." This I will describe.

Everybody knows that hares are extremely fond of parsley, and that they can scent it from a long distance off. My master always has a large bed of this vegetable carefully enclosed within a wire-netting fence. At intervals of a fortnight or so he digs up a quantity of parsley, and ties it in bunches; each bunch is firmly attached to a small stake which is driven into the ground. When placed in position, the parsley plants stand upright, and are bound around the roots by a piece of waterproof cloth, inside of which there is a quantity of wadding, which is saturated with chloroform. Four or six of these bunches are placed in spots frequented by hares, some ten yards apart. This is done about daybreak. My master takes up a position, generally in a wood, from which he can watch the parsley. As a rule he does not have to wait long for results. The hares soon find their favourite food, and as they cannot partake of it without bringing their noses close to the chloroform they are soon overcome. If allowed time to

revive they will return to the parsley and again become insensible. If the watcher be patient, and keep well out of sight, a dozen may be captured in this way in half-an-hour. When my master gives the word I run towards the parsley, kill all the chloroformed hares, and if necessary carry them back to him, one at a time.

My speed has gone and my sight is now failing. My scent seems still unimpaired, but with stiffness daily increasing I am beginning to realise that the end cannot be far off.

The man to whom I was once handed over for execution—I mean Garlick the younger—occasionally visits his father. Whenever he calls I hear more or less news of the mansion and its inmates.

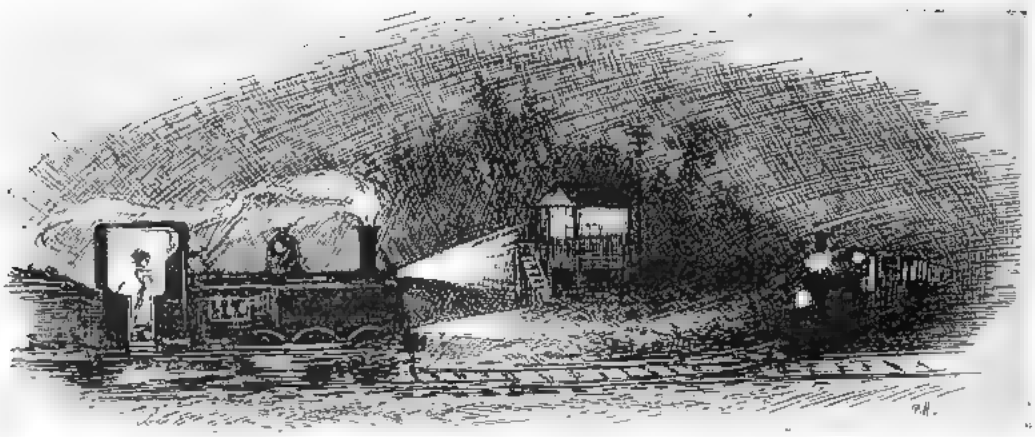
It seems that Cankerbrain's marriage did not improve him. As he grew older his betting propensity grew stronger. In course of time he got rid of all his property, and, Mr. Boxwood having died, he came to reside permanently at Mistletoe Mansion. Even then he continued to bet. To save him from exposure his wife paid his debts, and continued to do so until all her ready money was gone. Then she put down her foot. She told him plainly that she would not sell an acre of land to meet further liabilities. This did not deter Cankerbrain from pledging his credit in another heavy adventure, in which his usual ill-luck accompanied him. He came home, had a violent scene with his wife, and next morning was found dead in his bed.

My own beloved Miss Juliet is therefore a widow. Although I cannot forget her inconstancy, I have forgiven it, and would like to see her once more before I die. I lie on a bank by the side of the road which passes our cottage, and scrutinise the interior of every carriage which comes along. I have not yet given up all hope of bidding her good-bye.

Having had experience of both the palace and the cabin, I may be permitted to say that there is little to choose between them. True, the luxury of the former is an attraction to the idle, but its conventionality is repulsive to the brave and free. Even in the cabin dogs or men seldom die of hunger, and they enjoy a degree of liberty which is quite unknown among the rich. Having to work for one's living is no hardship. Necessity stimulates effort, and effort evolves masterhood. Sound and high judgment invariably admires the worker and despises the drone.

Let me say, in conclusion, that many of my race undergo vicissitudes even more trying than those which have fallen to my lot. Let the reader not delude himself with the notion that we are devoid of sense and feeling because we are dogs. Doubtless there are some among us, as among men, both senseless and unfeeling, but the great majority are capable of the strongest and most whole-hearted affection, and their lives are barren and cheerless if they cannot indulge it or do not find it returned. Let not our inability to speak blind human beings to the fact that we suffer torture when turned out of a home we love, or that we feel humiliated and wronged when sold or gifted to a, perhaps, cold-hearted stranger. The slightest attempt at observation will convince anybody of the truth of this. "He that hath eyes to see, let him see."

My work is performed and my course is nearly run. I have no wish to remain here longer. Inactivity has no attractions for me. If, as I believe, there is another life before me, the sooner I begin it the better. I will, I hope, live it all the more usefully for the experiences of this. I long for the time when, after a short period of profound slumber, I shall awake to find youth returned, vigour renewed, senses sharpened, and ardour swelling. I now calmly await the inevitable dissolution.



TO SAVE THE MAIL.

A Railway Story.

By S. A. Parkes and R. S. Warren Bell.

Illustrated by Paul Hardy.

I.

"TIME'S up!" called the guard to the fireman, as he waved his lamp. "How's your old coal-gobbler to-night?"

"If you're talking of the engine," said the fireman, with dignity, "she's all right. Mind you ain't left behind."

"I'd catch that old Jumbo 'opping," retorted the guard with a grin, and went back to his van.

The train in question was of the kind known as a "pick-up-goods," that is, one which stops at every little station which may have anything to send—not to be too proud about it, a sort of railway carrier's cart. And it should be added that we are going back some years for our adventure.

The fireman took a look at the steam gauge, and shouted to the driver that it was time to start. That individual, oil-can in hand, stepped up on to the foot-plate, pulled over the regulator handle, and opened the cylinder cocks; then engine No. 560 puffed slowly out of Rottingham goods station on her way north, dragging behind her about a dozen squeaking, banging trucks, and a guard's van.

For a few minutes, while they lumbered over the points, neither man spoke; then the driver gave vent to a grievance which was constantly in his mind.

"I wonder 'ow much longer I'm to be kep' on this lay," he growled. "Here we are night after night, what with shunting out wagons, and them transhipping, making four or five hours' overtime."

"We get overtime pay," suggested the fireman.

"Little enough," rejoined the driver. "Any'ow, regular hours is my motter. I've been too long on this job."

"You 'ave," observed the fireman, drily.

The driver glanced at his mate, uncertain how to take this last remark. But, as far as he could see, the fireman intended no sarcasm, so he continued:—

"There ain't no pleasure in driving an old bone-shaker like this 'ere; why, even you could do it, Jack."

"Thanks!" replied Jack, curtly.

"You needn't be 'uffy, it's meaning no offence," said the driver, adding, by way of apology, "it was only an illustration, as might be."

After this the conversation dropped, and presently they pulled up at a small station where they took on board various boxes containing cheeses; then, after a short but pithy

*This story is founded on an actual adventure connected with one of the northern lines.

argument between the guard and station-master over some way-bills, and renewed grumbling by the driver, they steamed out again into the night.

Mr. J. Baker was not a cheerful driver to work with, and no one fired for him if he could help it. At the same time, it must be admitted that Baker had some cause for growling, for overtime work was not well paid in those days, and his engine—a "six-coupled" of antiquated pattern—was slow in steam and full of faults. "A leaky old kettle," the foreman of the running-shed described her to be when she came in five times in about a month for numerous small repairs.

"There's plenty of variety about the old girl," granted Jack Downs, her fireman. "Last week it was a hot strap, the week before the feed pump, and yesterday a piston ring. It'll be a big-end's turn next by rights."

This cheerful assurance, given the day after No. 560 had considerately broken down forty miles away (causing considerable expenditure of time and language), was not received with any enthusiasm. However, No. 560 for once disappointed expectations, and was now working fairly well, thanks, perhaps, to her fireman's unceasing attention to her weak points.

Jack Downs, though only twenty-four, was a smart fellow, careful and thorough in his work. In appearance he was distinctly pleasing, of average height, with dark hair, and moustaches not too heavy to conceal his genial smile. Jack could have had many sweethearts, but he was faithful to one lass, who lived near the village of Luddon, at which his train stopped nightly.

Molly Henderson was the desire of Jack's eyes. Several times a week she came down to meet Jack, and as this was one of the nights on which she could usually get away from home, it can be understood that Jack was doing his best to shorten the journey by keeping up a good head of steam.

It had been nearly dark when they first started, the autumn being well advanced; but the moon had now risen, and the line for some distance lay clear before them in its cold light. About an hour after leaving Rottingham the distant signal lamps of Luddon shone out, and presently 560 stopped near the signal-box.

It was the usual practice to shunt the "pick-up-goods" here, if running near to time, to make way for a passenger train which did not stop at Luddon. Jack quickly got down from the engine, and pulled over the points. In those days hand-points were common, the signals and points only interlocking at the more important junctions.

After the goods train had crossed into the siding, Jack put back the points and climbed on to the foot-plate, first taking a good look round for Molly; but she was not in sight.

Presently the guard, leaving his van, came to the engine to make the following statement:—

"The engineer's relaying the up-road three miles further on."

"Well, I knew that; ain't it in this week's working-sheet?" snarled the driver.

"That's right enough," replied the guard. "What I mean is, it'll keep us here a good hour. The up line is closed between Woodstock Lane and Wickham Junction, so all trains 'as got to be worked over the down line. First, the train we're shunted for goes by, and when that's clear the up mail's due She'll pick up the pilotman and cross to our line at Wickham Junction, staying on our metals till just the other side of this station, so they're bound to keep us back till she's by, unless they want a collision."

"I 'adn't figgered it out, but it's true enough," agreed the driver, in a melancholy voice; "'ere we are, and 'ere we'll stop an hour. Why ain't there a public-'ouse near this siding?"

"Now you're talking sense," said the guard; "that's what I've been driving at. Let's go to old Brownlow's place; he'll give us a glass of beer for certain."

The driver hesitated. "It's slap agen the rules—we'd get the sack if it came out."

"No fear of that," the guard assured him. "It ain't half a mile; there's lots of time, and Jack will look after the engine."

And thus Mr. J. Baker was persuaded to commit a grave misdemeanour.

Old Brownlow, to whose house the guard and driver of the "pick-up-goods" decided to proceed, in hopes of obtaining some refreshment, was a strange individual who, according to popular belief, had been crossed in love during his youth, and had therefore vowed never to speak to a woman again. Whether this were true or not, he had certainly shut himself up in an old mansion, his wants being attended to by a gardener, who brought him what food and other things he required, but was never allowed to enter the house. If any persons, prompted by curiosity, invaded the over-grown garden and knocked at the door, Brownlow first looked through a small grating to satisfy himself that no woman was of the party, and then talked to the visitors from a window. He always seemed to take an interest in railway-men, and was known to be liberal with his beer when he liked. The driver and guard were therefore hopeful of getting what they wanted.

And they were not disappointed. Old Brownlow, after surveying the callers through the grating, appeared at the window with a jug and two glasses. While the two men partook of the ale, he chatted with them about their duties, though he did not seem to be much impressed by Mr. J. Baker's grumbling.

"After all," said Mr. Brownlow, "if you treat the company well, the company will treat you well. For instance, on your own admission, Baker, you ought to be looking after your engine at this moment."

"Oh, she's all right, sir," growled the driver. "Jack Downs is with 'er; you could leave 'im with a sack of diamonds for a week and find 'em all safe when you got back. 'E's a good boy, is Jack."

"I'm glad to hear you say so," returned Mr. Brownlow. "I heard a different account of Downs earlier on this evening."

The two railway-men stared at him.

"Why, sir, who could have been talking to you about Jack?"

"A man called Brocker. He has looked me up half-a-dozen times during the last few months. To-day he was in a very bitter mood, declaring he had been dismissed the company's service through Downs' agency."

"He's a liar," said the driver, forgetting his own grievances in hot championship of his steady young fireman, "that's what Jim Brocker is. Jack had nothing to do with his getting the sack; it was the drink what queered Jim's pitch for him—not Jack."

"Indeed," said Mr. Brownlow. "I am sorry to hear that a handsome, smart-looking fellow like Brocker should be guilty of such deceit. He seemed to bear Downs considerable ill-will, so I thought there must be something in his story."

The guard laughed.

"There's a woman in it," he said. "They're both after Molly Henderson."

Instantly the expression of Mr. Brownlow's face, hitherto comparatively genial, altered to one of the deepest gloom. When too late, the guard saw that he had touched on the forbidden topic. When the men had handed back their glasses, Mr. Brownlow bade them a curt good-night, and closed the window.

"You did it that time," said the driver, gazing reproachfully on his companion. "This means no more beer for you! Bill 'Awkins once put his foot in it like that, and the old boy didn't open the window to 'im next time he called."

"Well, come on," said the guard testily. "Who'd have thought he'd turn crusty like that?"

Without much conversation they crossed several fields, and at length came to the hedge beyond which lay the siding.

"WHY, SHE'S GONE!"

"Why!" cried Baker, glancing over and perceiving no train, "*she's gone!*"

"By George!" said the guard, his heart in his mouth, "so she has. What on earth has the lad been about, to go without waiting for us?"

II.

When the fireman was left alone on the engine, he stood for some time on the buffer-beam, gazing in the direction where he might expect to see Molly. A little way off the signal lights glimmered, and beyond could just be descried the deserted station, now closed for the night.

"Something must have delayed her," thought Jack; "it's lucky we shall have longer here to-night. I'll do a bit of cleaning to pass the time till she comes."

He got the tube brush, and, opening the smoke-box door, commenced this necessary work, throwing the soot clear of the line.

As he toiled with his hands, his mind ran on other things. Only one cloud dimmed the blue sky of his courtship. This was the rivalry of Brocker. Since he had been dismissed from the company's service for being intoxicated when in charge of his engine, Brocker had divided his time between the public-houses in the neighbourhood and the residence of Mr. Henderson, a retired police inspector. He and Brocker were fast friends, or rather boon companions, with the result that Molly saw a great deal more of this unwelcome lover than she cared about.

Jack Downs, vigorously wielding his brush, was wondering how soon he could remove his sweetheart from such undesirable society, when he heard a voice calling his name. In another moment his arms were round Molly, for she it was who had come up thus softly.

Presently, looking her in the face, he noticed tear-stains on her fair cheeks and other signs of agitation on her countenance.

"What is the matter, dear?" he asked, "and what made you so late?"

"My father has been having a long talk with me," said she, with an effort keeping her lips steady, "He is anxious that I should marry Mr. Brocker."

"What! A dismissed railway servant!"

"Father has saved a good deal of money, you see," replied Molly, "and Mr. Brocker has persuaded him to go into some sort of business with him."

"So your father would like you to be a nice party of three?" put in Jack.

"Yes, but of course I refused to listen to his suggestions."

"That's a trump!" exclaimed Jack, as he kissed her fervently.

Molly did not tell her lover, however, that, after getting away from her father, she had fallen in with Brocker, who, finding himself definitely rejected, had put no check on his language whilst giving Molly his views of the situation.

The down passenger train had passed while they had been talking. To distract Molly's thoughts Jack proposed that they should get on the engine and see how much she remembered of what he had taught her. So they climbed up to the foot-plate, all unconscious that a man, who had been tampering with the hand-points, was now stealthily approaching the goods train.

Molly soon showed that she had been an attentive pupil.

"That handle's the regulator, the one over the fire door—you call it the fire door, don't you, Jack, which you open when you put the coals on?"

"That's right!" said Jack. "What's the regulator for?"

"To start the engine," replied Molly, and proved herself equally well acquainted with the names and uses of other parts of the despised "kettle."

"By George!" spoke Jack, approvingly, "you'd make a tip-top fireman. I wish they'd let you fire for me when I'm a driver."

Jack looked at his watch.

"The up mail is nearly due. While I fire up will you see that our tail lamps are burning brightly, there's a darling?"

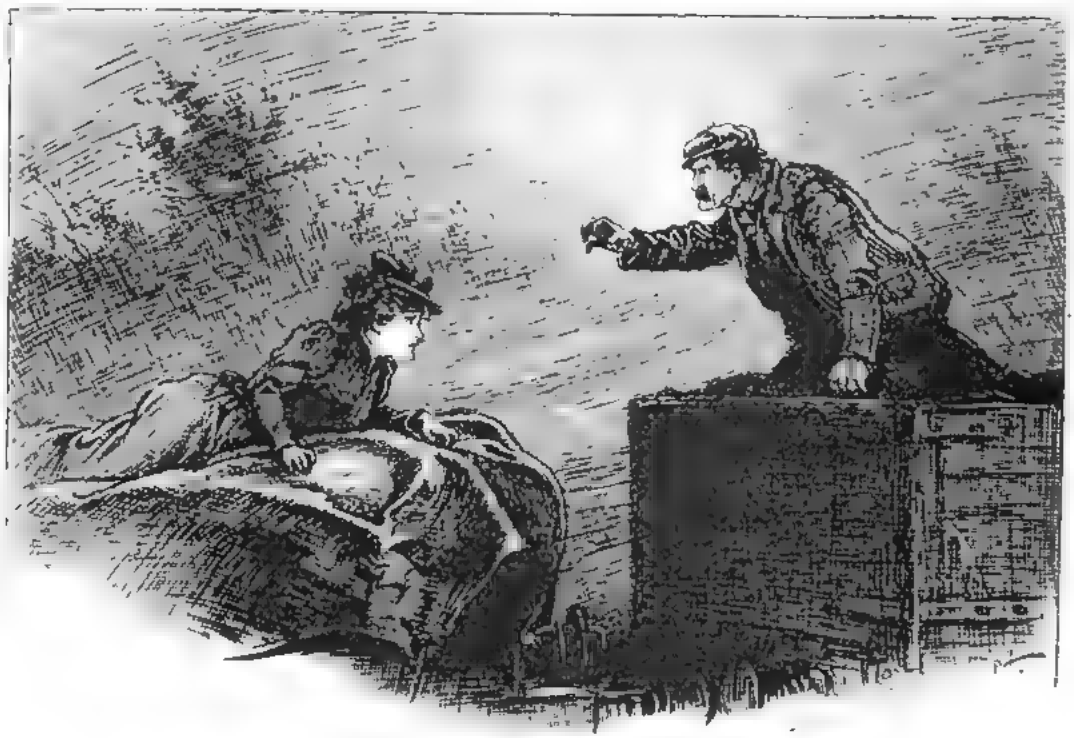
Molly got off the engine and walked briskly towards the guard's van to execute this commission, for she liked being made useful by Jack.

As she descended on one side of the engine the lurking figure crept round to the other. A moment later and he had sprung up the steps on to the foot-plate. Jack, bending down to open the fire door, looked round hastily, but at that moment he received a crashing blow on his head from a short iron bar, and fell forward on his face.

Brocker—for it was he—gave a grunt of satisfaction as he seized the fireman's long shovel. Molly, hearing a noise, had come running back, and now attempted to gain a foothold on the engine. Twice she made a desperate effort and nearly succeeded in pulling her unconscious lover from under his assailant's feet. But Brocker, thrusting savagely with the shovel, caused her to release her hold and drop heavily to the ground.

He then threw down the shovel, pushed over the reversing lever with frantic energy to the farthest forward notch, seized the regulator-handle, and started the engine.

The steam rushed into the cylinders, while the train, slowly gaining speed, ran along the siding, over the points, and out into the main line.



HE HAD NOW REACHED THE TRUCK IN FRONT OF HERS.

Brocker had done his work only too well. He had set the hand-points for the goods train to leave the siding, and it was now travelling rapidly on those metals which the night mail would presently pass over, owing to the repairs to the up line. Nothing save the revival of the prostrate fireman could prevent the goods train from dashing into the mail, and Brocker made sure against this by binding Jack's arms and legs with some cord found in the tool-box. His amiable task accomplished, Brocker turned to get off the engine, but, noticing that the train pulled heavily, looked back over the tender to see if any truck was off the line.

Now it should be related that Molly, though knocked backwards, had not been stunned, but quickly got up again, only to see the train moving by her. Acting on some almost unreasoning impulse, she caught at the hand-rail of the guard's van as it passed, and with difficulty clambered in. Once inside, the sight of the hand-brake gave her an idea, and she screwed it down with all her might, hoping to stop the train. But the engine was by this time fairly started, and the only effect of her action was to check the acceleration.

The full horror of the situation burst upon the girl. She knew that the mail must soon be coming to meet them; at all risks she must get to Brocker and entreat him to stop the train.

No sooner was her mind made up on this point than Molly set her teeth and proceeded to put her resolve into action. There were not many trucks, and their sides were low; she was an active girl, and could surely climb from one to another. The first part seemed most difficult, and the jolting of the train made the crossing from the footboard of the guard's van to the truck next it all the harder; but Molly screwed up her courage, essayed it, and succeeded. This truck contained the cheese boxes, which offered no obstacle, and it was an easy matter to get over on to the buffers and climb into the next vehicle. Here a tarpaulin covering some hay made matters worse, but, by lying flat, she managed to swarm across it.

On looking up again she saw Brocker regarding her from the engine, and, before she had realised his intention, he had slowed down the engine, swung himself from the tender to the nearest truck, and was making his way rapidly towards her.

As he came the moonlight showed her his face, on which was an expression so vindictive that Molly, abandoning all hope of mercy, lay

trembling on the tarpaulin, unable to advance or retreat.

He had now reached the truck in front of hers, and the terrified girl could distinctly hear his hurried breathing as he lowered himself over the side, feeling for the buffer with his feet, and keeping his eyes watchfully on her as he did so. Thus he came on while she gazed at him, trying vainly to think of some way of escape.

His left hand was on the tarpaulin, and the other was stretched out to clutch her, when his foot slipped, and for a few seconds his legs were dangling in the air, while he only saved himself by clinging to the side of the truck.

The girl, seizing her opportunity, quickly slipped from her precarious position to the other buffer, out of Brocker's reach, and crossed safely to the truck just quitted by him.

But Brocker soon recovered his footing, and was after her like a cat. Over the bumping wagons he pursued her, gaining rapidly, and the chase promised to end long before the engine was reached.

But chance again befriended Molly, for, when Brocker was within a yard of her, the rusty coupling snapped, and the train divided into two portions, that part which held Molly remaining attached to the engine, while the other, with Brocker on it, was checked by the brake in the guard's van, and soon left far behind.

Molly, though terribly exhausted, pushed forward with renewed hope, now that there would be no one on the engine to prevent her from pulling up the train. Redoubling her efforts she had reached the last truck when something caught her dress and held her back. Oh, the agony of that moment! To be almost within reach of her lover and yet unable to save him. A loud shouting and waving of lamps warned her that the goods train had come to the place where the one line was in use, and, looking down, she could see the platelayers gazing in astonishment and consternation as she was whirled past them.

No train was allowed to pass over the length of single line without the pilotman, but what availed this and other precautions against a contingency so impossible to foresee?

To prevent two trains from being in this section of the line at the same time, there was only one pilotman, and he was at the other end of it, waiting to be taken on the engine of the mail to pilot it safely over.

All this passed through Molly's mind as she struggled in vain to release herself, for a nail had gripped her skirt as she climbed over the end of the last truck, and she dared not let go with her hands to unhook it for fear of falling from the train.

Brocker had slowed down the engine, probably to make it easier for him to jump off; but when the train parted, the front part, relieved of the pull of several trucks and the drag of the brake in the guard's van, soon increased its speed, and was now travelling well over thirty miles an hour.

On they rushed past all the land-marks she knew so well, over the bridge which spanned a tiny stream, then into a short tunnel where the sparks from the chimney cast a lurid glow on the dripping roof, and the panting of the steam-blast re-echoed with a dull roar.

Molly gave a last despairing struggle, and literally tore herself free, nearly falling from the train in doing so. Recovering her balance, she clutched the end of the tender, and, holding on tightly, drew herself along the side to the footplate.

There lay Jack, still senseless; heeding him not, for the moment, she snatched at the regulator handle, and was about to shut off steam when a glance ahead caused her to change her mind.

The train was running down a long valley, and, far off in the distance, Molly had caught a glimpse of the mail winding its way up towards her in the bright moonlight. It was still on its own line, but had evidently picked up the pilotman some distance from the crossing to save a stoppage on the incline, and the driver, in the fancied security which the pilotman's presence afforded, was bringing his train along at a speed which would add enormously to the force of the impact.

A problem was presented to the mind of the inexperienced girl, and it had to be solved on the instant. The crossing where the mail would come on to their line was barely a mile away; shutting off steam and putting on the hand-brake would but little check the speed, which had now risen to forty miles an hour. On the other hand, if they could only pass the crossing before the mail reached it, they would leave their line clear for the passage of that train. In a flash Molly had made up her mind and opened the regulator to its full extent, at the same time sounding the whistle loudly to attract the attention of those on the mail, and enable them to reduce their pace as much as possible before they came to the cross-over road.

It was to be a desperate race; the mail had a trifle less distance to go, while the goods train had the advantage in speed, and loco. No. 560 was running as it had seldom run before. Rocking from side to side, it tore down the

hill, not, indeed, with the easy stride which the great wheels give to the engine of an express, but toiling and groaning as the crossheads slid to and fro on their guide bars and the ponderous connecting rods swung round with the heavy cranks.

It was then that the labours of Downs bore fruit, for had a cotter pin been loose or a nut missing the faulty engine could not have stood the strain.

As they approached the crossing an unforeseen contingency filled Molly with a terrible fear. "Had the pointsman guessed her object, and, if not, how were the points set?"

The setting that would bring the mail on to their line would also send the goods train dashing into the mail, and the girl, as this thought occurred to her, first made an involuntary movement towards the regulator-handle, and then, realising that it was too late, could only stand and watch the approaching train, whose headlights were already dancing before her staring eyes.

On the other engine they had shut off steam and were making frantic efforts to stop, but it was before the days of continuous brakes, and they had little to help them. Closer and closer they came, and it seemed to her overwrought mind that the mail was nearer the crossing than they were, while, as she clung to the weather-board, each of the remaining seconds seemed longer than an hour.

A hundred yards more—fifty—would they swerve or keep straight on? The latter meant safety, the former destruction.

The next instant it was decided. The goods train rushed by the crossing and kept on its own line; ten seconds later the pointsman flung over the point lever, and the mail swept on to the metals the goods train had just passed over. Molly had just sufficient strength to shut off steam, and then sank down beside her prostrate lover.

* * * * *

Little more remains to be told. Brocker, the cause of all the trouble, was found the next morning trying to dig up a signal post with a piece of slate; he was certified as insane, and promptly consigned to an asylum.

Baker and the guard were dismissed, but, a strike of engine men occurring a little later, Baker was taken on again as a stop-gap, and worked so well that he was finally reinstated in the service. The guard, though not so lucky as his companion, managed to get a billet in some soap works in which old Brownlow happened to have some influence.

"A WEDDING PRESENT, MY BOY."

When Jack Downs married Molly Henderson there was a big assemblage of railwaymen to see the knot tied, but a person who attracted almost as much attention as the pretty little bride — famed from one end of the line to the other for her daring climb from guard's van to engine over moving trucks—was Mr. Brownlow. For the hermit had at last come forth, and it may be added that his wedding present was a crisp £50 note.

"My dear," he said to Molly, before she and Jack left Rottingham station for their brief honeymoon, "I'd thought badly of women for many years till I heard what you did to save the mail—and your lover. You've made a lonely old man change his mind about women, and with a paternal smile Mr. Brownlow saluted the girl's blushing cheek in a way that showed he had not entirely forgotten the fact that weddings grant special licenses.

STORIES ABOUT STAMPS AND STAMP COLLECTORS.

A Medical Man's Surprise.—An eminent physician had a good patient in an old lady who never had much the matter with her, but who felt more satisfied and comfortable when under the constant eye of her medical man. After many years of pleasant acquaintance, of regular fees for very unnecessary visits, from a medical point of view, the old lady died of sheer old age. In her remembrance of her faithful M.D. there was, *inter alia*, as the lawyers put it, a curious bundle of old envelopes.

Why the dear lady should leave him this bundle of old envelopes was a puzzle to the recipient. They seemed to be of no value. They were only the envelopes. His own habit was to pitch the envelopes of his correspondence into the waste-paper basket, and why the old lady should have taken the trouble to save hers was more than he could understand, and still more mysterious was the leaving them to him among some very valuable souvenirs. They were neatly done up with silk thread, and were in a splendid state of preservation, though very old.

He was a busy man, but this bundle continually flitted before his eyes as a bit of a mystery. He asked friends for a solution. Some suggested that they might have been the precious coverings of old love letters. At last a man who had been, in the long ago of his school days, a stamp collector, suggested that the foreign stamps on the envelopes might have been deemed valuable by the good old soul. That was thought to be a possible explanation.

The M.D. had never been afflicted with such a craze, not even at school, but he had heard, even in his busy life of late, that some of these things even sold at auction. He had regarded that as idle tattle, but, all the same, he thought he would inquire into the truth of it.

So one day, passing through a London square, he dropped into the office of Messrs. Blank & Blank, the well-known fine art auctioneers, and asked if they ever sold old postage stamps. Being assured that they did, he produced his little bundle of envelopes, and inquired if there was any value in the stamps on them. The auctioneer examined the packet, and replied very definitely in the affirmative.

Said the M.D., "You surprise me. Now what would be their value?"

"Well," said the auctioneer, "I could not say how much they might fetch, so much depends upon condition, attendance, and other things, but they will probably sell well."

The M.D. was as much in the dark as ever. He wanted to know whether the value was likely to be represented by shillings or pounds. So, to put it to a practical test, he asked if the value were such that the auctioneer would be willing to suppose that he was in want of cash, and would advance him any money on the envelopes.

"Certainly," said the auctioneer. "How much would you like—£20?"

The cheque was written and signed, and the M.D. walked away very much astonished, but he was very much more astonished some months after, when he had forgotten all about it, to receive a further cheque for over £200 as the balance of the sum which the stamps had realised.

It is unnecessary to say that they were rare stamps. They were, in fact, valuable old issues

of New South Wales on the original envelopes, and in a splendid state of preservation.

CONSCIENCE MONEY.—Every boy has heard of the converted thief who returned part of the proceeds of one of his robberies with a note to say he did so "becos his conshens nawed," and promising to send some more "wen conshens nawed again." But I wonder if any reader of THE CAPTAIN has ever met a boy whose "conshens nawed" over a stamp transaction? We stamp collectors are said to be hardened sinners when it comes to swapping stamps. Still, we are not all bad.

At least, Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. assure me that we are not. They had long ago sent a collector a selection of stamps. He stuck to the lot. But years afterwards he was converted by the Salvation Army, and, having been led to see the error of his ways, he was seized with remorse, and forthwith sent Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. half the value of the stamps, promising to send the rest later on. But, although that was long ago, his "conshens" has not yet "nawed" a second time.

The same firm assure me that they have had dozens of letters with money sent anonymously by collectors who had swindled them. They once received £2 in gold from New Zealand, with a sheet of paper on which there were simply the words "Conscience money."

These few facts, I submit, conclusively prove that we stamp collectors are not all bad boys, that, in fact, we have consciences that do "naw" sometimes.

A NOTABLE BARGAIN.—Nothing so gladdens the heart of a well-seasoned specialist as to get as a bargain for a few shillings a variety which years of searching have failed to secure, even regardless of cost.

Such a variety turned up some years ago at a stamp auction, and, by some wise and fortunate accident, it had not been noted as a rare variety, but was simply catalogued unnoticed with a lot of common stamps. A great specialist, who badly wanted that self same stamp, spotted it. He treasured up his secret in his innermost philatelic heart, hoping against hope that no one else would be so fortunate as to make the same discovery.

When the day of sale arrived, we sauntered down to the auction room together. He scarcely expected that such a rarity would escape, but, any way, he was determined to outbid all competitors for it up to close on £20.

The lot was put up and started with a bid of 5s., and, after sundry more or less reluctant bids from various parts of the room of experienced collectors and dealers, it was knocked down to the great specialist for 18s., and it now reposes, as a gem of the first water, in a collection recently sold for £30,000.

PAYING OUT A CRITIC.—Some years ago the writer of these pages was foolish enough to publish his idea of the market value of certain unfashionable stamps. A dealer, in a stamp journal, criticised those values as absurdly "tall." The writer subsequently called upon that dealer and asked if he had any of those stamps priced down to his own conception of their market value.

"Certainly," said the dealer. "Here is a nice little lot I bought cheap at an auction last night. You can have them at half catalogue."

I made a purchase, and we squared up, both parties being eminently satisfied. For one of those stamps I had paid 25s. It was a duplicate of one already in my collection, and it was thinned at the back. So I took it on to another and shrewder dealer, and sold it to him as a bargain, which he was glad to have at £10.

I have never explained to that dealer the true inwardness of that stamp, because it would have been insulting a critic, but he is a reader of THE CAPTAIN and an advertiser in its popular pages, and he will, no doubt, recognise the facts. Anyway, I have no "conshens" to "naw" on the matter; indeed, it is a pleasant reminiscence.

A PILLOW-CASE OF RARITIES. — Some years ago a well-known collector got wind of a whole pillow-case full of real old rarities that might be had for the cheek of asking. Now, an enthusiastic stamp collector knows no bounds when a *bona fide* rarity may be had cheap, and when it may be had for the asking he does not stand upon ceremony.

The possessor of the pillow-case of desirables was quite unknown to the collector, and the news of the treasure came to him quite accidentally.

Said a friend to him one day, "I say, old chappie, you're afflicted still in the stamp direction, are you not?"

"Rather," was the emphatic reply. "What of that?"

"Well, my sister is staying with an old lady who, being over eighty years of age, has conceived the idea that it is time for her to put her house in order in readiness for her anticipated departure to a better country, and Fan is helping her to go through her papers. Among the papers that turned up in the sorting over was a pillow-case stuffed with old stamps. She told

Fan to burn the lot, as they were of no use, but Fan thought it was a pity to destroy them, as they might do to amuse her little nieces. So the pillow-case has been put aside for the time, and Fan talks of bringing it home for the kids. The old lady's sons were among the first settlers in Sydney, and, as she had a habit of cutting off the stamps from all her letters, and as her sons were her chief correspondents, it occurred to me that you might like to have a look through the lot and pick out some for yourself."

"First settlers in Sydney! Great Scott! My boy, there may be scores of Sydney Views in the lot."

"Sydney Views? No, there are no pictures; only old postage stamps."

"I don't mean pictures of Sydney. What we call 'Sydney Views' are the rare first stamps issued by New South Wales."

"Oh, I see. I expect there is scarcely anything else but old New South Wales stamps, if they are of any use."

"Any use, my dear fellow! They may be worth a little fortune. Let us have them up at the earliest moment."

Ways and means were discussed, shares were arranged in the treasure trove, and a lady friend returning from the old lady's neighbourhood was to be asked to call and bring away the pillow-case. It was agreed that matters could not wait the return of the sister. The sister was written to in a cautious and guarded manner, and the lady friend was commissioned to call for the parcel. In due time it arrived in London, and was met at the terminus and carried home in a state of great excitement. There were visions of months of sales, of gold in plenty, and of many a quiet spree together.

When that valuable parcel was opened and spread out on the floor, thousands of stamps were disclosed to view, but every stamp there was of the commonest red penny English persuasion! There was not a foreign or colonial stamp of any sort in the whole lot! The collector and his friend were a day after the fair. Someone else had picked over the pillow-case and annexed the Sydney Views.

REVIEWS.

We have received Part I. the British Empire portion—of Stanley Gibbons' catalogue for 1902, and find that it has undergone considerable revision. It has for many years been more or less a catalogue for the specialist, and this new edition is more than ever so. Such countries as Griqualand, New South Wales, New Zealand, and Zanzibar, especially the last country, have been opened out to include numbers of new varieties. When a reader of THE CAPTAIN wishes to specialise any country he should take this Gibbons as his guide, for it is as reliable as the best experts can make it. A new feature is the inclusion of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony as British colonies. In the matter of prices, some are up and some are down, but, in the main, prices are mostly up.

From Mr. H. L'Estrange Ewen we have a massive and elaborate "History of Railway Letter Stamps," printed on heavy plate paper and profusely illustrated. It makes a fine quarto of over four hundred pages. The author traces the history of the establishment and the use of the Railway Letter Post. We are told that it was established in 1891 "to legalise the carriage of letters by railway companies, and to enable anyone to obtain quicker transmission of a letter by despatching it by the first train without waiting for the general mail." You place the ordinary postage stamp on your letter and hand it in at the railway booking office with a 2d. fee. The clerk affixes the Railway Stamp, and the letter, at the end of the railway journey, is posted at the nearest post-office or pillar-box. Mr. Ewen contends that these Railway Fee Stamps represent postal work, and are therefore collectable as postage stamps, and he certainly has provided an excellent guide to their collection.

SOME INTERESTING NEW ISSUES.

Again there is little to report in the matter of new issues—a few changes of colour, a provisional or two, and one new design. But the forthcoming King's Head issue, we hear, is being prepared. The first sheet of the half-penny value has been duly filed at Somerset House. According to *Ewen's Weekly Stamp News* the colour is a somewhat sagey green; "the design, head looking to left in upright oval with curved label above and rectangular label below."

BAHAMAS.—Messrs. Whitfield King & Co. send us a penny stamp of new design for this colony, which we will illustrate next month. It is of large size, like our 5s. English stamp, and of the pictorial bi-coloured order. The central portion of the design, which is printed in black surrounded by a frame in lake, gives a view of an avenue of trees, at the end of which is a flight of steps known as the Queen's staircase. Watermark crown and C.C., perf. 14. 1d. lake, centre black.

HOLLAND.—The current 3c. value has been changed in colour from orange to sage green, perf. 12½ as before. 3c. sage green.

MONACO.—The 15c. has been changed in colour from pale rose to purple brown.

NEWFOUNDLAND promises a new 4c. of purple colour, bearing an engraving of the Duchess of Cornwall, in honour of the recent royal visit of the Duke and Duchess to Canada.

SEYCHELLES.—This colony has for some time been short of 3c. and 6c. stamps, and has been surcharging its stock of other current values to make up the deficiency. The following have been issued:—

"3 cents" on 10c. ultramarine and brown; sur. black.
"3 cents" on 16c. chestnut and blue; do.
"3 cents" on 36c. brown and carmine. do.
"6 cents" on 8c. brown purple and ultramarine do.

ZANZIBAR.—Two stamps of the current series have been changed in colour, the 1 anna from indigo to carmine, and the 4½ annas from orange to blue and red. 1a. carmine, 4½a. blue and red.

NOTE.

In my article on the issues of British South Africa in the October CAPTAIN *I hinted that collectors could obtain the current issues at the London Office at face value. The Assistant Secretary of the Company writes to say that sales at the office are now restricted to orders to the value of £5 or over in the aggregate.*

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Ginger (WYNBERG).—There is no catalogue quotation for Rustenburgs. Their value, in my opinion, is *nil*. The Transvaal Commemoration has not been officially surcharged. **Niatpac.**—New issues are now supplied at such a small increase on face value that the B.S.A. refusal to sell small quantities is not a serious disappointment. Sorry I cannot spare time to work your plan. **Deucher.**—The U.S. 90c. of 1855, used, is catalogued by Gibbons at 120s.; by Bright at £7; and by Scott (New York) at thirty dollars. **T. M.** (GLASGOW).—Thanks for your interesting letter. New Guinea was illustrated in November CAPTAIN. It is a genuine issue. Position of surcharge on stamp is not regarded as a variety. Stars on N.S.W. 2½d. clearly indicate retouching or re-engraving, therefore are varieties. 1d. rose also retouched. Great Britain 1d., used on Cape army letters, is only good as a souvenir. Stamps with perfs. cut, or no perfs. on one side, are of less value than a stamp perf. all round. Many thanks for the official Mexicans. Had not seen them before. Does value of Seebecks admit of discussion? I think not. Venezuela "Resellada" 10c., unused, is catalogued at 3d.; used, it may be worth a few pence more. **Timbre Postale.**—Dealer mentioned by you is thoroughly reliable. **H. Barnshaw.**—In Transvaal V.R.I. there are no raised stops. Sketch was wrong to that extent. **L. M. H.**—U.S. stamp you describe is a fiscal, not a postage stamp. Stamps defaced with a name written across are fiscals; some countries, before cancelling stamps came fully into use, cancelled with a pen. **Bobs.**—There are many varieties of St. Helena surcharged one penny, therefore cannot say value from your description. I never recommend anyone to collect North Borneo or Labuan. **W. Gatis.**—Transvaal 2s. 6d., used, perf. 12½ catalogued at 2s. 6d., and perf. 12½ × 12 catalogued at 6s.

COMMENTS ON OCTOBER COMPETITIONS.

No. I.—A great many excellent suggestions for a National Memorial to Queen Victoria were sent in. I was glad to notice that the majority were against the idea of the memorial taking the form of a statue, and in favour of public institutions of all kinds, so that the money could be spent in doing practical good.

No. II.—The "Four Towns" comp. is as popular as ever, there being between two and three thousand entries again this time. The correct list is as follows: Macclesfield, Maidenhead, Margate, Manchester; Newark, Newport, Northampton, Nuneaton; Oldham, Oswestry, Oxford, Oldbury; Paignton, Peterborough, Plymouth, Portsmouth; Ramsgate, Reading, Ripley, Rye; Salisbury, Scarborough, Sevenoaks, Sheffield. The prize-winner in Class II. had only five wrong.

No. III. In this comp. also the entries ran into the thousands. The correct list, in order of the number of votes, is as follows —

1. Bee hum's Pills.
2. Pears' Soap.
3. Ogden's Cigarettes.
4. Cadbury's Cocoa.
5. Bovril.
6. Sunlight Soap.
7. Fry's Cocoa.
8. Mellin's Food.
9. Quaker Oats.
10. Monkey Soap.
11. Koko for the Hair.
12. Eno's Fruit Salt.

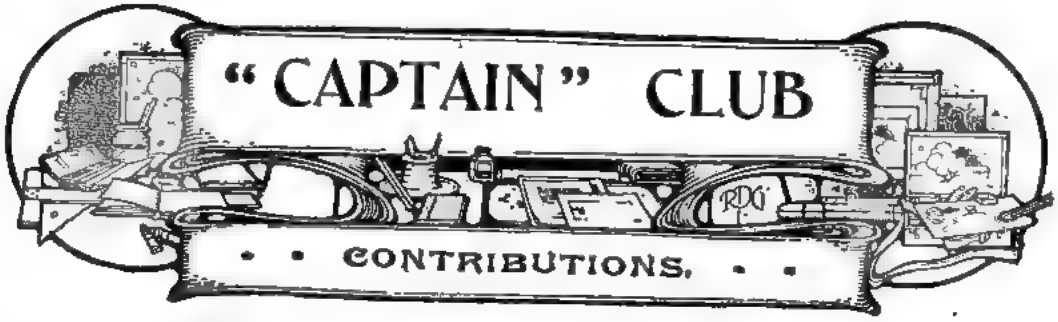
Nobody had the entire list quite right, but Harry Hall, in Class II., had eleven, and a great number had ten right.

No. IV.—This competition produced a good number of post-cards, both amusing and artistic, with verses to correspond. Harry Darnley's "orchid" card deserves special mention, also the photographic ones by C. J. Masefield and G. Corfield. I was also much amused by the original cards sent in by L. McDonald Gill, Frederick W. Carman, C. O'Neill, Dudley Buxton, and A. F. Dunster.

No. V.—Jas G. Ritchie, the first prize winner in Class II., managed to find 484 contradictory proverbs that is, 242 couplets. It's enough to destroy one's faith in proverbs for evermore! Great pains have been taken with the lists, and some are beautifully neat, especially those of Lionel D. Saunders, John L. Turner, and Freda Goode.

No. VI.—Out of a large number of entries, comparatively few novel competitions were suggested, the best being those relating to art, but the majority contented themselves with variations of old ideas, and a few proposed such bold measures as a cake competition, regardless of the tax which its adjudication would impose on the digestion of

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.



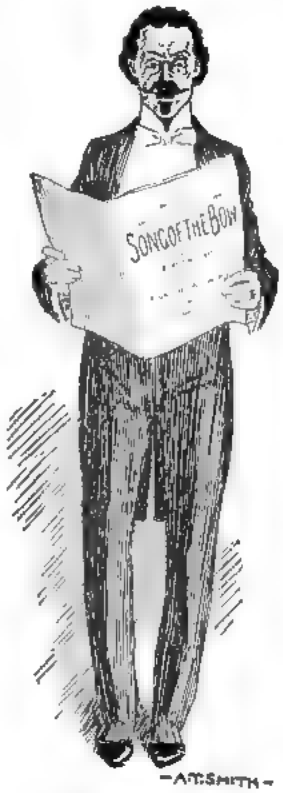
As the prize is divided this month, instead of splitting a year's subscription to THE CAPTAIN, we shall forward copies of "Tales of Greyhouse" to JOHN STEPHEN COX and G. W. BERRY, for their respective contributions—"Christmas, by a Cynic," and "Saturday Afternoon Rambles."

Christmas.

By a Cynic.

CHRISTMAS will soon be with us again, and all the comic papers will issue Christmas Numbers. There will be the same good old illustrated joke, representing the Modern Youth disgustedly throwing from him the oranges, sugar-plums, and crackers that he has found in his stocking, and deploring the fact that he has been offered neither cigars nor cigarettes, and the same venerable poem about the two lovers sitting on the stair-case while the sweet Christmas bells and the waits outside usher in Christmas morn with joyful melody.

The same ghosts, demons, and goblins will appear to greedy little Tommy in his sleep after the Christmas party, and the same portly old gentleman will slip on an orange-peel and be requested by an ingenuous small boy to repeat the performance "as he looked so funny." We may look forward with certainty to the re-appearance of the picture representing Santa Claus being pillaged by mischievous imps while on his way here from the North Pole, and also to the pathetic little Christmas story of the hungry, homeless newsboy, slumbering in a doorway on Christmas Eve, being found by a "tall golden-haired lady," and awakening on Christmas morning in "such a comfortable bed, with downy sheets of snowy whiteness," to find toys of every description piled at the foot of it.



THE OTHER BOW.

We all like little Timson, and enjoy the good stirring English songs he sings so well, but we think it hardly wise of him to have chosen the "Song of the Bow" to sing at the school concert—boys are so very personal.

(Drawn by A. T. Smith.)

Oh! I had almost forgotten the ancient illustrated joke representing the anger and consternation of a party of waits, who, after having played lustily outside a certain house for the better part of an hour, are informed by a policeman that it is to let—and the joke about the starving family to which a big hamper was delivered by mistake and called for next day, when nothing remained to represent its contents but a cold sausage and a small mince-pie.

The old-maid-and-mistletoe joke will re-appear unblushingly this year, together with our old friend the evergreen wheeze about the convivial toper returning home somewhat "exhilarated" and cordially "shaking hands" with a pump, at the same time wishing it "A Happy Yuletide."

Oh, yes! the comic paper Christmas Numbers will all be out soon!

Order from your newsagent at once! JOHN STEPHEN COX.

Christmas.

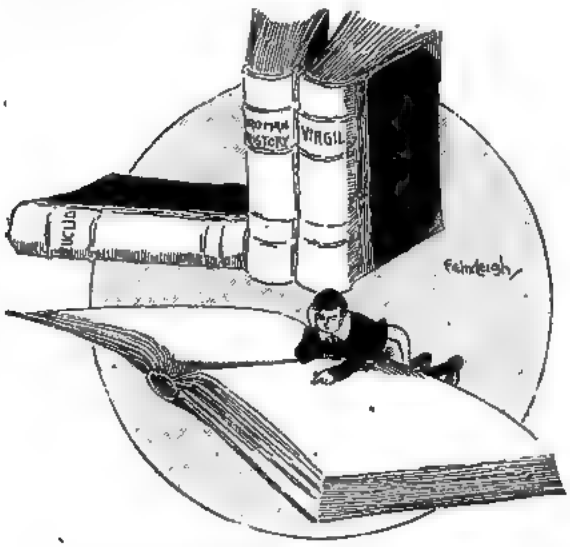
By One Who Is not Cynical.

METAPHORICALLY speaking, Christmas is symbolical of a warm, tight hand-clasp of the different members of one family round the cheerful hearth of their common home before scattering far and wide again for their labours in the New

Year; just one short time of closest and sweetest brotherly and sisterly intercourse before the world's cold business cares and the exigencies of modern life separate them again; a break between the hurry and rush of one year and the next.

The best known story in the world is that of the holy origin of our Christmas. And now, when we stand in the middle of Christmastide; "when the soft snow silently falls on trees and fields and houses, covering them with Christ's white mantle"; when the cheerful faces of those we love best are around us; when there are no thoughts in the hearts of anyone except those for each other's welfare; when peace and content seem to steal into every man's life; what can we desire but to be good, to live a better life, and to follow the clearly put lesson of Christmas more closely? The warm and inspiring influence for nobler ideals of ordinary every-day life that Christmas has the power of implanting in the hearts of mankind is illimitable!

Then think of the hoary old legends and traditions clinging to Christmas! How much would the disappearance of "Santa Claus" from the Christmas festivities detract from their charm—to older people, besides the children, for at what other time do they enjoy buying gifts for the young ones as when they buy them at Christmas, telling the happy little recipients that "Santa Claus" brought them? They are quite willing to stand aside and let all the thanks be poured out to "Santa"—*their* thanks lies in the fact that they have pleased someone.



According to Smith Minor, this about represents the amount of work he must do compared with the brain power at his disposal.

(Drawn by Felix Leigh.)

A COLD (K)NIGHT.

(Drawn by W. Bridge.)

The man who has not heard himself laugh heartily for months becomes like a jubilant schoolboy at Christmas. Everybody is happy, everybody is jolly, and everybody feels good-humoured towards everybody else. Good-hearted enjoyment is prevalent everywhere.

Some people say Christmas is dying away—very slowly, but very surely. Let us hope this is not true! Whatever should we do without Christmas? The chances of such a thing becoming a possibility are very few indeed, and I hope the time will never come when you will have no one to wish you "A Jolly Christmas!"

"NOBODY MUCH."

Another King Alfred Story.

ANNIE (meeting her friend on the steps of a public library): "'Ullo, Florrie, what are you doin' 'ere?"

FLORRIE: "Why, dad sent me round to find out all about this Millinery of King Alfred; 'e doesn't understand it at all!"

ANNIE: "Why, you silly goose, it's the *drapery round 'is statue!*"

(Sent by M. L. SUNDERLAND.)

[This conversation was actually overheard during the celebration of King Alfred's Millenary, and sent to Lord Rosebery, who repeated it at the banquet held after the unveiling of the statue.—ED.]

A DULL DAY IN MANSION HOUSE SQUARE, LONDON.

(Photograph by E. S. Jinman.)

Say This Fast.

Llanfairpwllgroyngyagogerychwyrndrobwyallantisiliogogogrch. This word is the name of a place in Anglesey. It contains fifty-eight letters, and only Welshmen can pronounce it.

H. H. WELLINGTON.

A Christmas Carol.

COME usher in His birthday morn
With songs of joy and gladness,
To-day our Saviour Christ is born,
Come joy and banish sadness.
The church bells ring a merry chime,
Our hearts in time are beating;
The hedge-rows glisten white with rime,
Come all and give Him greeting.

Come, deck the walls with berries red,
With green-leaved holly blending;
A Babe in lowly manger bed
Hath brought us peace unending.
With deeds of kindness deck the day,
Seek out each needy brother;
Your wealth is but to give away
In helping one another.

Rejoice, rejoice, and spread abroad
The glorious gospel story;
On earth Hosanna to the Lord,
And in the highest glory.
The joy-bells ringing high above
Bring peace to every hearer;
For love is Heaven, and Heaven is love,
And Christ hath brought them nearer.

O. H. W.

Some Arts We Have Lost.

WE may talk about civilisation, of the wonders it has accomplished, of the many inventions it has brought with it; but, before talking about the wonders of vehicles driven by electricity, the electric telephone, and other wonderful inventions of the period, let us glance back and take notice of some of the things and arts that *were* known by the ancients in the past, and are *not* known by us now.

To start with. Are there any builders who can build edifices *to last* as long as the ancient Egyptians could? Some of the modern buildings will last seven hundred years, perhaps, with a great deal of restoration at different dates, but who can build a house, a church, or a palace that will last *three thousand* years, as the Egyptians and the ancients of Anahuac (Mexico) built their pyramids? Nobody. The art is lost, and in the past the later civilisation has not regained it. Then, again, who can embalm a body to make it withstand time, as the Egyptians could embalm? Not to make it

MR. C. B. FRY.

(Taken at Eastbourne—Sussex v. Oxford University—by G. B. Lyn.)

HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, WESTMINSTER.

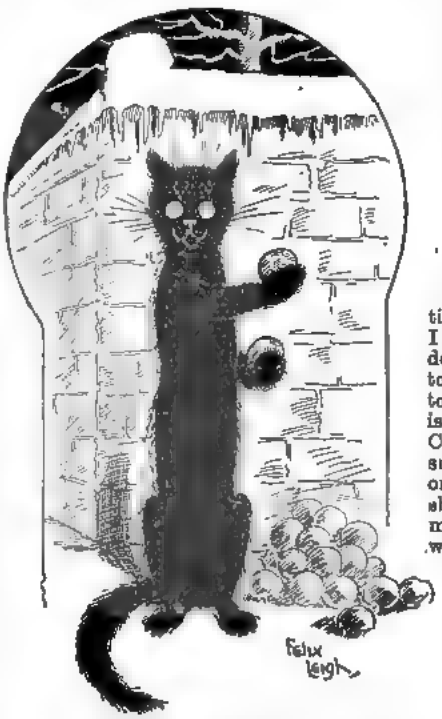
(Photograph by E. S. Jinman.)

last for *one* year or for *two* years, but for *four thousand* years. There are other instances of things that we have gone back in, other arts that we have lost, but there is no space here to mention them.

J. Garratt, Junr.

Saturday Afternoon Rambles.

PERHAPS there are a good many fellows, who, now that the winter months are upon us, find themselves at a loss what to do on a Saturday afternoon. No doubt there are many who cycle, or play football, but there are some who do not go in for these pastimes, and find the time hang rather heavily on their hands. A very pleasant and also healthy way of passing the afternoon is to go for a good country ramble. This is what I and a friend of mine do nearly every Saturday. As there are so many walks near London, we do not, as a rule, go to the same place twice. We usually start about three o'clock, and go by train to a suburban station and from there walk to a town or village about eight or ten miles away, doing about four miles an hour; so that, supposing we walk twenty miles, and take an hour for tea, and a rest at our destination, we are back again in London in good time. Although there are many pleasant walks round London, I think that those in Kent or Surrey are the best. If a walk in Kent is preferred, it is best to ride to Catford, and from there one may walk either to Bromley, Keston, Chislehurst, or Farnborough, which places are all within ten miles of that station. In Surrey, one may train it to Putney, and then walk on to Richmond, Kingston, Hampton Court, or Sunbury, or go to Tooting, and then on to Ewell, Epsom, etc.



THE SNOW-BALLING SEASON IN CHRISTMAS CATLAND.

A "Long Tom" and plenty of ammunition.

(Drawn by Felix Leigh.)

On the north roads, the best stations are East Finchley or Hendon, from which Barnet, Whetstone, Hadley, Pinner, and Watford are all within easy distance. In Essex, the walks are not so good, the country being flat and uninteresting, but still, by riding to Chingford or Loughton and then walking on to Epping, Cheshunt, or Waltham Abbey, very pretty country may be seen. There are many other pleasant walks near London, and I think, if given a trial, this will be found a good way of passing the half-holiday.

George W. Berry.

"CAPTAIN" CLUB CRITICISMS.

A. H. E. J.—Don't bother about old memories. Describe the present. All very well for an "old boy" of sixty or seventy to "look back" with a sigh, but you are young. As you seem to be fond of essay-writing, choose such subjects as "Strength of Character," "On Making Use of Time," "Truth," "Unselfishness." Read the works of great essay writers like Carlyle, Washington Irving, and Macaulay. Try, in everything you write, not to *dream* of what is gone and over, but to grapple with the events of to-day. **S. G. Savage.**—A kind thought prompted you to send your description of your little Irish tour, but I fear it would appeal to but few of our readers at this time of the year. **S. Wheater.**—I should have preferred a short description of the castle as it is to-day. A dry catalogue of historical facts connected with it is not particularly exhilarating. Can't you send some stories of smuggling on the Yorkshire coast, or something about Scarborough's share in the fighting such a town must certainly have seen in the warlike days of long ago? **W. M. and D. C.** (Tighnabruaich).—Regret cannot print your poems. No doubt when you are a little older you will send me something I shall like. Both poems are written with feeling. **I. K. E.**—You will probably find something more interesting in your old papers to send up if you burrow among them again. **B. K. T.**—You are a trifle too young to write stories just yet. Bide a wee, and in the meantime—read good authors. **H. L. Dobrée.**—An ardent hockey player tells me that hockey is no game for ladies and gentlemen to play together, and I cannot agree with you "that hockey will take premier position amongst combined ladies' and gents' games for the season 1901-2." **Una.**—I think your stories are rather prettily written, and might do very well for children's papers, such as *Little Folks* and the *Prize*. As you do not put your real name on the letter, or send a stamped addressed envelope, I am keeping the stories here for you in case you wish to have them back. Before submitting them to the editors of the papers I have mentioned, I think you will find it advisable to have them type-written. Not quite enough incident in the little article. However, don't despair. No

doubt a happy idea for a contribution will occur to you one of these days. **Jester.**—Regret I cannot use your contribution. **Kenneth Davies.**—Great improvement. Don't think we can use. The jokes not quite O.K. **P. Blanchard.**—We think the same as the other editor. **Wm. Duncan.**—The snap-shots of Glasgow Exhibition are well enough taken, but rather ordinary. Send something more original. **Clubbite No. 916, W. J. Goodbrand, and Harold L. Ball.**—The snap shots taken with your "Brownie" are altogether too faint, otherwise I might have used one or two, as the subjects are good. **Fred. Torr.**—Your idea is a good one, but I am doubtful about being able to use the sketch.

Contributions also received from: Leonard R. Scrase, Edgar Baker, John E. Laing, E. King Fordham, J. E. Stevens, W. J. H. Hunter, J. A. Willan, Fred. Thompson, Charles F. Knowles, L. J. Smith, E. A. Taylor, W. Humphreys, F. G. Skinner, Fred. Thompson, "Winifred."

(A number of contributions held over.)

"CAPTAIN" COMPETITIONS FOR DECEMBER.

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus:—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete.

You may enter for as many competitions as you like; each "comp." must be sent in a separate envelope, or, when possible, on a post-card.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners; not pins.

Address envelopes and post-cards as follows:—Competition No. ——, Class ——, "THE CAPTAIN," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by December 12th.

The Results will be published in February.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—Only write on one side of each sheet of paper. Only one competition must be put into an envelope. Anybody disregarding these rules, or failing to address envelopes properly, *will be disqualified.*

AGE RULE. A Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 25 comp., so long as he has not actually turned 25. The same rule applies to all the other age limits.

No. 1.—**"Four Towns"** (FINAL LIST).—By a regrettable mistake the list of towns was left out of the November number. It will be found among the advertisements this month. Cut it out and send it up after you have filled in the names of the towns. All the towns contain over 5,000 inhabitants, and are situated in the British Isles. There will be three prizes of 10s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 2.—**"Handiwork Competition."**—Here's a chance for readers who are clever with their fingers. Send a carving, or a specimen of your fretwork, or an illuminated text or proverb, or a pen-wiper, or something made out of paper or cork, or, indeed, anything you can make with your fingers. Pack carefully when sending. Nothing will be returned, but all articles will be sent to such Hospitals or Homes as the O.F. may decide upon. There will be three prizes of 10s. Date limit for sending articles—JANUARY 12th.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-three.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 3.—**"Anecdotes of Cats."**—You will see Mr. Louis Wain's kind offer in the interview with him. Send your anecdote in a letter or on a post-card, as you like. You can send as many attempts as you like, but *each anecdote must be sent separately.* SIX ORIGINAL DRAWINGS OF CATS by Mr. Louis Wain will be given to the six successful competitors.

One Class only ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.

No. 4.—**"Left-hand Writing."**—It is most important that you should learn how to write with the left hand, in case anything should happen to the right. Mr. David Ker wrote "The Black Evil"—a story which appeared in THE CAPTAIN a few months ago—with his left hand, as he had injured his right hand. This shows how useful the ability to write with both hands may often prove. Write on a sheet of paper or post-card the sentence: "*I certify that this is written with my left hand. Signed, John Smith*" (or whatever your name is). Underneath this, using your right hand, put: "*I certify that the above is written with my left hand. Signed, John Smith.*" Three prizes of 7s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Eighteen.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Fourteen.

No. 5.—**"Winter v. Summer."**—Send an essay, not exceeding 400 words, describing the delights and possibilities of Winter as opposed to Summer. Three prizes of 7s.

Class I. ... ... Age limit: Twenty-five.
Class II. ... ... Age limit: Twenty.
Class III. ... ... Age limit: Sixteen.

No. 6.—**"Box and Tree."**—See back of frontispiece. *Trace your drawing;* do not tear out the page. A prize of 7s. will be given to the sender of the best competition.

One Class only ... ... Age limit: Twenty-one.

EXTRA CONSOLATION PRIZES.—Three prizes of ONE GUINEA will be awarded to the three competitors who at the close of Vol. VI. have gained the largest number of "Honourable Mentions" during the past six months, beginning with the results published in the October number.

12, BURLEIGH STREET,
STRAND, LONDON.

Christmas is the carnival of kind hearts. Good and kind people are good and kind all the year round, but at Christmas time they excel themselves in thinking of others—such abundant chances does Christmas afford to those who delight in giving rather than receiving! But to all well-intentioned folk Christmas comes in the white guise of a good fairy—to all who wish to bridge over rifts in friendship, to send tokens of remembrance to those at a distance, and to keep fast those bonds of fellowship which neither time nor space can sever if the fellowship be true. Christmas is still a season which, in spite of what sour curmudgeons may say to the contrary, receives the heartiest of welcomes from all who "ponder in their mind" the origin of and the real reason for the keeping of this great and holy festival.

That Christmas calls forth the best that is in us is evidenced by the many pretty and benevolent customs which obtain at this season throughout Christendom. December is the month of countless doles of food and money provided by legacies of the long-ago dead; so can a man cause his memory to be blessed hundreds of years after he has fallen beneath the hush of his last sleep. Winter is a hard time, when gifts of food and fuel and raiment are most appreciated by those who have but a scanty store of those things which keep out the cold. It is not surprising that Christmas was the favourite giving-time of those ancient benefactors, for, as they knew well, red berries grow for birds in the winter not without a cause.

A NEW NEIGHBOUR.
(Drawn by Louis Wain.)

Once upon a time, 'tis said, good St. Nicholas used to throw purses of money in at the windows of poor maidens, to be used by them as marriage portions. Hence arose the Continental practice of putting presents in children's shoes and slippers on St. Nicholas Eve, the little ones being told that their patron saint had brought these gifts through the windows, although they were shut! From this custom came our own, of putting presents in children's stockings, a custom that is full of mysterious delight, of wondering, peering wakefulness, and much hunting in the stockings in the dawn of Christmas Day. It is a custom, this, which should be kept up, for those who remember the feelings of childhood can understand that the anticipation of going through its stocking is a thousand times more delightful to the child-mind than the more prosaic breakfast plate that comes into force when childish things are

being put away and the children that were are children no longer.

"That's for Remembrance."—Of all seasons, Christmas is the season of remembrance. Cards flit from John o' Groats to Land's End - tokens that somebody is remembering somebody else. There is much grace in even a cheap little card sent with friendly intent, for the average man is a poor man, who cannot afford expensive things, and therefore his wife and his daughter are poor, too. Yet these poor people seem most of all to keep friends in mind, and to post them Christmas greetings with warm-hearted zeal and regularity. Let your cards, then—cost they a halfpenny or half-a-crown—go flitting to your friends this Christmas. It is very sweet to be remembered. One can't be writing all the year, but one should try to keep friendship green by despatching a line on a card or in a letter at Noël-tide. For a card, be it ever so small, is as reminding as a sprig of the herb rosemary—

> There's rosemary for you; that's for remembrance.
> Pray you, Love, remember

A. B. C. sends me the following touching lines on :—

THE IDEA MERCHANT.

(With apologies to Southey.)

How does the I.M. go down to the door?
Bumping, thumping, jumping, stumping,
Dashing, crashing, bashing, smashing,
Rolling, bowling,
Scowling, howling,
Right side, wrong side,
Upside, downside,
Manuscript flying, I.M. crying,
Old Fag laughing, office-boy chaffing
Every day bore
Sighing—"Oh, lor,
Never no more!"
That's how the I.M. goes down to the door.

By "Captain" Authors.—The book-shops, stalls and libraries now have three books by CAPTAIN authors, *i.e.*, "Tales of Greyhouse," "Acton's Feud," and "The Heart of the Prairie," so if you want to increase the contents of that "CAPTAIN Shelf" of yours which already holds your volumes, you can add the weight of these works to it. "Acton's Feud" and "The Heart of the Prairie," freely illustrated and in very handsome covers, cost 3s. 6d. each; "Tales of Greyhouse," being a larger book than the other two, is published at 5s. The "Tales," by the way, have been roped together in such a way as to form a history of Greyhouse adventure covering a period of eighteen months.

Dear Bounder Football!

WELCOME indeed, old Pachyderm!
In sunshine or in storm
Our thousands shall attend to cheer
Your light and airy form.

You are a *bounder*, there's no doubt.
But as you older grow,
You'll find yourself so kicked about
That all your bounce will go.

"More kicks than halfpence" is your fate.
A fate you've bravely faced,
All undisturbed, with figure trim—
You can't be too tight-laced.

Like other bounders, whom we met,
Your skin is somewhat thick.
But what *they* need, *you* always get—
The simple homely kick.

We like you, though, and with the crowd
You're often well "in touch";
And if you fall on them by chance,
It doesn't hurt them much.

But most we like to see you fly
Amid the din and dust—
So if you'd never fail us, don't
Go out upon the "bust."

O. H. W.

"The Life of a Century," recently published by George Newnes, Limited, is one of the most wonderful books that has appeared for some time. Here we have, set in chronological order, a most comprehensive retrospect of the nineteenth century, commencing at the latter end of George III.'s tenure of the throne, and following the fortunes of Great Britain and the British Empire to the end of the reign of Queen Victoria. No effort has been spared on the part of the author, Edwin Hodder, to present, in all its completeness, a truthful record of the advances of the age in all spheres of life—political, religious, and social. In fifty-four long chapters "The Life of a Century" records in detail everything which has affected the interests of England and her Colonies, embracing in a concise manner such momentous events as—the rise and fall of Napoleon, the Peninsular War, the Reform Bill, the Oxford Movement, the Crimea, the Indian Mutiny, the Afghan and Egyptian campaigns: and no small amount of space is devoted to biographies of those men to whose master minds we owe Britain's status to-day in Art and Industry. "The Life of a Century" contains 760 pages, over five hundred illustrations, and, with its copious index, forms an excellent *multum in parvo* English History of the last one hundred years. I cannot imagine a more valuable book for a school library. The price is 10s. 6d. net.

Back of Frontispiece (November).—Here is the key to the "secret writing." The cipher was the work of Stanley B. King, who has been rewarded with a volume of THE CAPTAIN. The sentence was taken from the competition comments in our September issue, and the solution is as follows: If you go down the first column, up the second, down the third, up the fourth, and so on, you will read:—

"A large number of entries for this competition. On account of the quantity, neatness was a good deal taken into consideration.

"Competition Editor."

A number of readers sent correct solutions.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. J. R. S.—(1) No one has a legal right to the English throne except the family now occupying it, as regulated by the Act of Settlement in 1702, by which all other descendants of the Stuarts were excluded. The few enthusiasts who call themselves Jacobites or Legitimists assert, however, that the lawful monarch of these realms is Princess Mary of Modena, an out-of-the-way descendant of a distant Stuart, and in their calendar, published yearly, they call her Queen. Her son they describe as the Prince of Wales, but his own opinion of the rightfulness of his claim to that title may be measured by the fact that he was one of the Emperor of Austria's representatives at the Jubilee Commemoration of the late Queen Victoria. (2) The Marquis of Salisbury has four relatives holding important positions in the Government: Viscount Cranborne, son, Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs; the Earl of Selborne, son-in-law, First Lord of the Admiralty; Mr. Arthur Balfour, nephew, First Lord of the Treasury; Mr. Gerald Balfour, nephew, President of the Board of Trade.

CHRISTMAS PRIZES
AND
PRESENTS.

"Acton's Feud."
By FRED SWAINSON.
Price 3s. 6d.

"The Heart of the Prairie."
By JOHN MACKIE.
Price 3s. 6d.

"Tales of Greyhouse."
By R. S. WARREN BELL.
Price 5s.

Theology.—As you are only sixteen, you have seven years to get through before you can be ordained, so you have plenty of time. As regards the University or Theological College, much depends on what you can afford. As you aspire to a D.D., you must go either to Oxford or Cambridge. Get the "Oxford University Handbook," price 2s. 6d., from any bookseller, for particulars as to college fees, etc. Putting the D.D. aside, you might take a three years' course at King's College, London. This grants the A.K.C. (Associate of King's College), which most bishops accept. Write secretary for particulars. If you want my vote for a place, I should advise Oxford. No doubt your clerical tutor can supply you with further information.

Herbert Latimer.—I am sorry to say that your letter dated February 6th was mislaid and has only just been brought to light. However, better late than never! I am afraid I do not know of any book which will help you in your shipping-office work. If I were you I should ask one of the members of your firm, as he would be likely to know a good deal more about this sort of thing than I do. I trust your health is better, and that you are keeping up your tub and Sandow's developer. As for suggestions *re* keeping in health, read Mr. Fry's articles, especially that entitled "On Keeping Fit," in November, 1900.

Ignotus.—The state of the weather in the immediate future can easily be judged by observing the web of any species of spider. When there is prospect of wind or rain the spider shortens the filaments by which the web is sustained. If it lengthens these threads fine calm weather may be looked for, the duration of which may be judged by the length to which they are let out. If a spider remains inactive it is a sign of rain. If it keeps busily at work during rain the bad weather will not last for long. If spiders are at work just before sunset the night will be a very fine and clear one.

A. H. R.—I wish you and other people who want to obtain literary posts would study my short article called "Advice to Literary Aspirants," in April, 1901. All you've got to do is to go steadily on working and keeping your eyes open for anything that may turn up in the way of preferment; get to know as many journalists as possible, join the Institute of Journalists, and subscribe to the Newspaper Press Fund; and sooner or later you will probably get your chance if you are a good man. Certainly it helps a man in journalism if he's a barrister, but it is not an indispensable qualification.

H. Jones.—It is said that the Chinese used a primitive hand press centuries before the time of Gutenburg and Costa, for both of whom is claimed the honour of inventing printing. The first steam printing machine was made by a *Times* compositor, Thomas Martyn, in 1804, but the pressmen opposed it with such violence that it was never used. The first steam printing press to be used at all was the invention of a man named Konig, and was used for the *Times* in 1814. Mr. John Walter, of the *Times*, gave a great deal of attention to the perfecting of both these inventions.

H. G. sends me the following unsolicited testimonial: "I am a fairly busy individual—getting on, too—possessed of a refractory liver and jaded out. Hav'n't had a holiday for three years, in fact. Notwithstanding, I find time to read (and sometimes re-read) THE CAPTAIN, and I desire to place on record my firm conviction that it beats all the liver pills ever advertised, and as an antidote for 'brain fag' it is absolutely without equal."——I thank you, "H. G." Try to get that holiday! All work and no play—you know!

H. F. Bulman.—(1) You seem to be a capital fellow. What do I consider the best serial we have

published? Well, I mustn't draw invidious distinctions, but I may say that "Acton's Feud" and "A Cavalier Maid" rank very highly in my estimation. I also think that Mr. Ascott R. Hope's "Red Ram," in Vol. I., was particularly good, although it was very short. (2) You are clubbed. (3) If I may give you a word of advice, sign your name a *little* more distinctly. Those flourishes are somewhat confusing.

Carrot Tops (Bedford Grammar School) sends me the interesting information that F. G. Brooks, "besides being head of the school, is head of the choir, captain of the footer fifteen this season, captain of cricket last season, and fastest runner in the school." I wonder how many other school captains can show such an admirable all-round record.

Dandy.—Undoubtedly too much stamp-licking is detrimental. Any stationer will sell you a "wetter" for a shilling. Use that instead of your tongue. As you seem to belong to a delicate family you should take care of yourself and avoid catching cold. If you feel that there is anything wrong with you, you should certainly consult a doctor.

Typewriter.—You can keep up the dumb-bell practice. Don't overtire yourself. Consult a doctor about the cold sponge. As you are delicate, you must be careful about these things. A good rub down in the morning with a rough towel will do you good.

R. S. T. (Clifton).—The new game "Ball Goal" is sold by Frank Bryan, 3, Bayer Street, Golden Lane, London, E.C.

Expectant.—Alden & Co. will be able to sell you what you want. **B. A. G. H.**—Clubbed. I've no doubt Smith Mi. will be writing again soon. **E. A. B.**—When we have received a good selection we will publish another page of "Schools." **E. Jones.**—(1) Clubbed. (2) Stamp collecting. **A. Logan Harris.**—Address now rectified. **Harry Payne.**—Clubbed; criticisms noted. **W. D. Ereaut.**—Go for the prize, and always send your best—your very best—work. **A. Newsome.**—Clubbed. **Walter Dandie.**—Clubbed. I think the Civil Service is an excellent profession. **Sarnia**—I will see that your name is put down in the supplementary list. Send the article to the C.C.C. Corner. **E. J. S. D.**—Clubbed. Am much interested in the latter part of your letter. **Arnaak.**—Certainly go in for running, etc., in moderation. Remember you are not as strong as a boy. Your writing is not at all boyish. **A. G. Walker** (N.Z.) **and others.**—You may buy a silver badge as well as a gilt one. **Paroro and Orsha** (N.Z.) may join the club if they send their real names and addresses. I will try and give them a good cure for chilblains next month. **A. A. N.**—I do not know of any firms that purchase silver paper. **P. G. H.**—An excellent bull's eye. **C. T. H.**—Very pleased to hear of The Captain's record sale at Wellington College. **Rats.**—Only one can join. **Frank Hebberd** (Palamcottah).—Many thanks for the stamps. **Patrick Little** and other readers who signed his letter are informed that the editor will comply with their wishes. **Cosmopolitan** and **X. Y. Z.**—I have handed your letters to Mr. Manning Foster, who will reply to you in due course. **Nancy.**—So sorry to hear you have been such an invalid. Send your album and I will do what I can for you.

"Captain" Club (would-be members, etc.).—J. Gill, A. S. Murray, C. P. Harding, Claude Burbidge, and others, are requested to look through their back numbers for particulars regarding club. Also to read notice at foot of editorial, which they do not appear to have done. By joining the club, readers are entitled to consult our various experts free of charge. Other things may follow in time, but that's as far as we've got at present.

Official Representatives appointed: J. Fuller (Worcester), Harold Scholfield (Prestwich), A. A. Allain (Guernsey), W. H. Willicombe (Sheffield), George D. Thomson (Aberdeen), Malcolm J. Connal (Seven Kings, Essex), Otho Bingham (Wincanton), Victor C. Bawden (Wallington, Surrey), Hugh L. Dobrée (Jersey), J. B. Higgins (Birmingham), D. Campbell (Belfast), H. Davenport Rice (Bournemouth).

I also have to acknowledge letters, etc., from: "Smut," "Ophir," "Bon Ami," "Natal," F. G. Skinner, "One of the Club," "Gotem," "High-class," William Mate, "S. T.," "S. B. H. Y." (clubbed), and many others.

(*A large number of answers held over.*)

THE OLD FAG.

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***Bonâ fide* purchasers of "The Captain" are invited to apply for membership of THE CAPTAIN CLUB. See previous numbers for further particulars. Readers are informed that "The Captain" Badge may be obtained from "The Captain" Office, price Sixpence. The Badge is made (1) with a pin attached, for wearing on hat or cap, or as a brooch; (2) with a stud, to be worn on the lapel of the coat; and (3) with a small ring, as a watch-chain pendant. When applying, please state which kind you require, and address all letters to: Badge Department, "The Captain," 12, Burleigh Street, Strand, London. The badge may also be had in silver for two shillings. There is no charge for postage.**

FACSIMILE OF "THE CAPTAIN" STAMP, A NUMBER OF WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED TO ANY READER WHO SENDS STAMPED ADDRESSED ENVELOPE.

Results of October Competitions.

No. I.—"National Memorial to Queen Victoria."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: R. A. H. GOODYEAR, Tune Street, Barnsley, Yorks.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: LILIAN MABEL SNOW, Camden Rise, Chislehurst, Kent.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Ethel Salkeld, Gladys Morris, Ernest A. Taylor, Jas. J. Novin, Elsie Simmons, Ethel Walker, A. E. Searle, Helen W. Panke.

CLASS II. (Age limit. Twenty.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: LIONEL D. SAUNDERS, Albion Cottages, Heavitree, Exeter.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: MAUD M. LYNE, 2, St. John's Villas, Cheltenham; and GERTRUDE PITT, 15, Regent's Park Terrace, N.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. Waugh, Jamay Trimble, Jessie Tree, W. Aitken Oldfield, Roy Carmichael, Gordon McVoy, William J. Leech, Sydney J. Moses, W. Higgins.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: FREDERICK G. BRISTOW, 119, Stratford Road, Plaistow, E.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: HARRY MULLETT, 206, Abbey Road, Barrow-in-Furness.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Isabel Pickthall, Alistair Saunders, Daphne Kenyon Stow, Harold Schofield, M. Schindhelm, William Bradbury, J. Chalmers, C. E. Altman, J. H. Weeks, Frida Phillips, Freda Goode.

No. II.—"Four Towns."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF 10s.: KATHLEEN STARTIN, Avenue House, Upper Richmond Road, Putney, S.W.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: HORACE TAYLOR AUSTIN, 15, Aberdeen Park, Highbury, N.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Maud E. Green, E. Amy Lucas, Margaret Hill, Harold Butfield, Edward Goodman, J. T. Crowther, J. Martyr Luck, Andrew Smith, B. Peace, Wm. Honeyman, E. B. Reed, Ethel Salkeld.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Eighteen.)

WINNER OF 10s.: BERTRAM GIBBONS, 29, Coborn Road, Bow, E.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: EDWARD T. FAIRLES, 61, Vaughan Road, Romford Road, Stratford, Essex, HENRY KELNER, Morton House, Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury; and HERBERT DOWLE, 24, West Street, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

HONOURABLE MENTION: H. O. Mens, J. G. Farr, Hal. J. Henderson, T. R. Davis, L. B. Harbord, C. Foley, Frank Harper, Edgar Jones, Harold B. Goodwin, O. W. B. Roberts, W. H. Sadler.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

10s. DIVIDED BETWEEN JOHN GREGORY, 42, St. John's Wood Road, N.W., W. GORDON LEGAT, 13, Park Terrace, Sunderland, Durham; and HAROLD D. TRANBY, 152, Weston Park, Crouch End, N.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Edgar Baker, Eric Randall, L. H. Newbery, J. Rayner, W. D. B. Brooke, Percy May, Raymond Dobb, E. Rose Dutton, R. Greening, Edgar Moody, James Taylor, Roy Macdonald, Fred. Ewens, George Le Marie, Albert Parker.

No. III. — "Twelve Most Widely Advertised Articles."

CLASS I. (Age limit. Twenty-two.)

WINNER OF 7s.: W. L. TAYLOR, "Gorehead," Kilmington, near Axminster, S. Devon.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: MARGUERITE DOWDING, Chelsea House, Bath; and WILLIAM ARMSTRONG, 13, Marchmont Road, Edinburgh.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Isabel Jones, Emily J. Wood, C. Const, Kathleen Deering, E. W. Stiles, Janet Rogers, Oscar Pearn, M. Anvril, John Richardson, H. E. Tetlow, Mary E. Morgan, H. R. Hilton, Harry Darnley, Olive Scaulen.

CLASS II. (Age limit. Eighteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: HARRY HALL, 7, St. John's Terrace, Dolphin's Barn, South Circular Road, Dublin.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: GEOFFREY LANGSHAW-AUSTIN, "The Knoll," Lancaster; and A. G. PEARSON, 24, Glencoe Street, Newington, Hull.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Aston Peach, K. S. Anderson, W. Webster, E. Brinsley, E. R. Mason, Margaret Mellish, J. B. Mayer, Frank Harper, C. B. Tidboald, Lilian R. Ormiston, Donald Sinclair, Wilfrid G. Adams, J. S. Nicol, Katherine Hyde, W. Russell Copke, F. M. Matthews, D. W. Marion.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Fourteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: MARJORIE HARLAND, "Carmen," Ray Mill Road, Maidenhead, Berks.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: CHARLEY WOOLLET, 1, East Bank, Kendal.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Jack Campbell, Frank Hughes, Muriel Burt, Eileen Kuhling, Norman Ogilvie, Lionel Brooks, K. T. Cox, Victor Jones, A. Mackinnon, Edward D. Ede.

No. IV.—"Picture Post-cards."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: HARRY DARNLEY, 96, Vicarage Road, Wolverhampton.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: C. J. B. MAKEFIELD, "Roschill," Cheadle, Staffs.; and L. MCDONALD GILL, "Strathmore," Bognor.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Frederick W. Carman, Edgar J. Ereaut, C. O'Neill, S. O'Neill, W. J. White, M. C. Fraser, Mary Moreton, Arthur Burr, F. G. Joyce, A. A. Allain, R. E. Hull, Oscar Pearn.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: G. CORFIELD, Little Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: DUDLEY G. BUXTON, "Rosedene," Dollis Road, Church End, Finchley.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. H. Joynt, Constance Leigh, S. Goodwin, D. H. Neilson, Norman B. Ashford, Owen Parry-Jones, T. R. Davis, Walter S. Leeming.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: ROYSTON LE BLOND, Westminster School, Westminster, S.W.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: GEOFFREY SUNDERLAND, Church Hill Cottage, Midhurst, Sussex.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Agnes Mostyn, A. F. Dunster, "Silk," J. S. Timbs, R. G. White, Wilfred Hill, Alistair G. Saunders.

No. V.—"Contradictory Proverbs."

CLASS I. (Age limit. Twenty-five.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: C. V. THOMPSON, "Mountain Loof," Corrawullen, Carrignllen, Co. Leitrim.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: KATIE H. DUNNILL, Palmerston House, Ross-on-Wye.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Albert E. Ereaut, Maud E. Green, Edgar J. Ereaut, Mabel Hoon, Edith Kirkman, W. Osborne, Dorothy Hudson, W. Cook, Charles Knowles.

CLASS II. (Age limit. Twenty.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: JAS. G. RITCHIE, The Schoolhouse, Killinchy, Co. Down, Ireland.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: JOAN THOMAS, "Glas Fryn," Forest Fach, Swansea.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Winifred D. Ereaut, Lionel D. Saunders, F. Const, Kathleen Brinsley, J. Harold Rouad, John Leigh Turner, A. Edwards.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: ALBERT E. HAMILTON, 6, Lawrence Street, Belfast.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: GLADYS H. AMPHLETT, 3, Tolmers Square, N.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Margaret P. Thompson, Enid Phillips, James Const, W. Bullard, Freda Goode, S. G. Bryant, Duncan H. Neilson.

No. VI. —"Idea for a Competition."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF 7s.: L. MELLOR, 6, Roseleigh Avenue, Leigh Road, Highbury, N.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: S. E. LINDRIDGE, "Maisonette," Filaham Park, West St. Leonard's.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Mollie Biddons, James Munro, M. J. Barry, J. G. Ritchie, W. Parry, Gladys Morris, Mayne Reid, William J. Leech, Brenda de Jersey, Dorothy C. Hudson.

CLASS II. (Age limit. Sixteen.)

WINNER OF 7s.: SELINA BRIDGEMAN, "Neachley," Shifnal, Salop.

CONSOLATION PRIZES have been awarded to: D. M. FALKNER, 10, Cargate, Aldershot; and W. J. JULEFF, 17, Clitheroe Road, Stockwell, S.E.

HONOURABLE MENTION: A. Drummond, A. G. N. Belfield, Daphne Kenyon-Stow, B. G. Palmer, Stanley B. King, David Pryde, Leslie Wigley, A. Whitehouse, F. Long, E. F. Fairlie, Maud C. Dowson, Vic. H. Dufour, F. K. Brownrigg, G. H. Marshall, Emma Hedley.

CLASS III.—(Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: BASIL DRAKE, 4, Hawthorne Villas, Nutfield.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE has been awarded to: J. K. ATKINSON, Harrogate College, Harrogate.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Tom Edwards, A. Webb, Ethel Chapman, H. Cartwright, Wilfred Hill, W. English, J. M. Heath, Marjorie Harland, J. H. Smith, Jennie Ritchie.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," "Sunday Strand," "Wide World," or one of the books by "Captain" authors advertised in this number.

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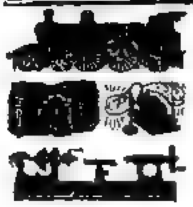

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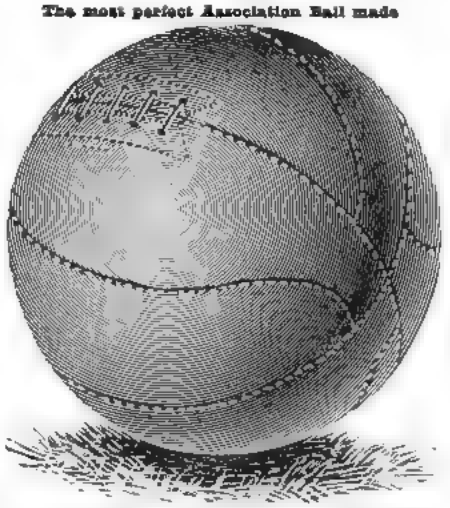

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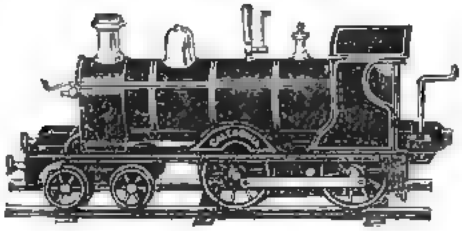

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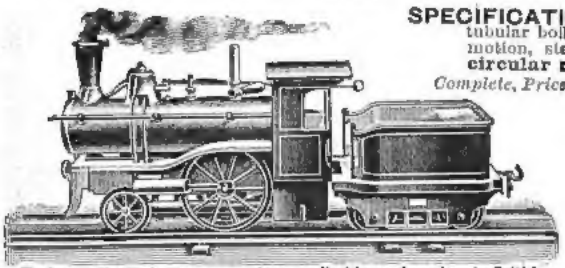

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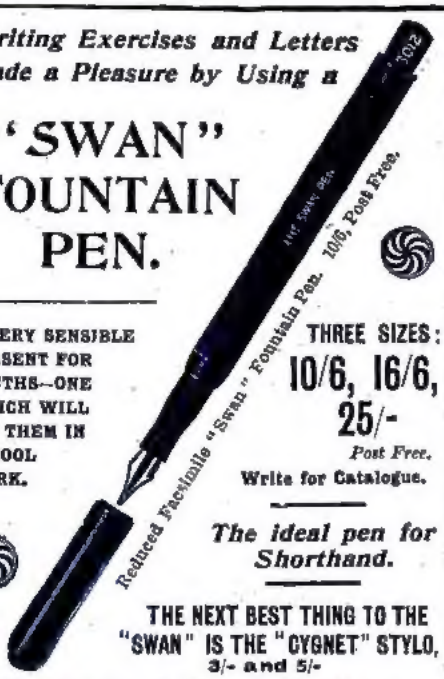

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